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MISCELLANEOUS NOTES ON OLD TESTAMENT TOPICS

BARNARD-C-TAYLOR

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MISCELLANEOUS NOTES
on
OLD TESTAMENT TOPICS

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Miscellaneous Notes

on

Old Testament Topics

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By
BARNARD C. TAYLOR 1850 -

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To the one whose intellectual ability has been a source of delight in teaching; whose loyalty to the Bible made any light upon it welcome; whose love for her Lord inspired others to emulate it; whose unselfish friendship has taken away some of the "labor and sorrow" from the years that have been added to the "threescore and ten," and whose encouragement by exhortation and example led to the determination to carry to completion what has been purposed for years, this book is gratefully

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PREFACE

The topics considered here have been selected from many discussed in the classroom as being of special interest. Some of the views given will be found to differ but little from those commonly held. It will be seen that there is no tendency to adopt the views that are called "critical," "modern," "radical." This lack is not due to any ignorance of such views. A candid study of these during more than forty years has but strengthened the conviction that the Bible, including the Old Testament, may still be accepted as the inspired word of God.

The controlling aim, both in the classroom and in these Notes, has been to show how the Old Testament prepares for a fuller understanding of God's purpose to redeem men.

In the "Homiletical Suggestions" it is intended to indicate only how the Prophets and the Psalms may be used *properly* in preaching—getting from these portions of the Bible what is *really* there, and avoiding the too prevalent custom of collecting themes and thoughts from any source whatever, and attaching to them a text as though they were Biblical.

I send out this little book with an expression of my love for those many students who have shared with me the joy of considering this part of God's word, and

with the earnest prayer that my Lord may use it to help those who may read it to comprehend more fully and to appreciate more highly the rich truths found in the Old Testament. The hope that he will do this makes me the more reconciled in approaching the end of the inexpressibly great privilege of teaching in the classroom.

BARNARD C. TAYLOR.

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I

MISCELLANEOUS NOTES ON OLD TESTAMENT TOPICS

I. Importance of the Old Testament

The Old Testament was not written for the Jews only. Parts of it were produced when the Jewish nation was near its end. It is clear, not only from the fact that Christians adopted the Hebrew Scriptures for their own use, but from the way in which the New Testament writers weave the elements of the older Scriptures into their own writings, that they form a necessary part of the completed Bible. There is a mutual relationship between the old and the new divisions of our Bible that obviously enhances the intrinsic, as well as the relative, value of each. Two-thirds of our Bible are in the Old Testament. And while its mere bulk does not measure its worth, yet the amount of it should prevent its being ignored. Nor was the Old Testament superseded by the New.

The part of the Bible most often read, and that is most familiar to the reader, is in the Old Testament—the Psalms. The part that furnishes most apt Scriptural admonishings is found here—the Prophets. Some of the most important elements of our common law are here—in the laws of Moses. What has been

regarded as the most remarkable literary production of any time is here—the book of Job. The most universally applicable directions for right living are here —the Proverbs. In brief, the parts of the Bible most effective to arouse the guilty conscience or to quiet the sorrowing heart are in the Old Testament.

But the importance of the Old Testament is most clearly indicated by the use that Christ made of it in his teaching, and by the Apostles in their writings. Not only did Jesus cite these Scriptures to confirm his claims that he was the promised Messiah,[1] he cited them also to convince the Jews of their obligations to God, and to show the real essence of the laws they professed to accept as governing their conduct in their relations to each other.[2]

In the writings of the Apostles, especially those of Paul, constant use is made of the Scriptures of the Jews to prove that the promises God had made to send a Redeemer were fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth.[3] The only Scriptures that Jesus and the Jews then had was the Old Testament.[4]

[1] John 5:39, 45-47.
[2] Matt. 5:17, 18.
[3] Often in Romans and Galatians; 2 Tim. 3:15, 16.
[4] Matt. 22:29; 26:54, 56; Luke 24:26; John 10:35, etc.; Acts 1:16, 17:2, 11; 18:28; Rom. 15:4; 16:24; Gal. 4:30; 2 Peter 1:20, 21.

II. General Character of the Old Testament

The statement is often made that the Old Testament is a record of the independent struggles of the Israel-

ites to attain higher ideas of God. What we have, on this view, is not a revelation given to men, in any true sense, but a religious evolution, similar in character to what is found in the records of any other ancient people, the only difference being that the Israelites, for some reason not apparent, gained better views than the rest.

Such a view is arrived at, not by a just study of these writings, but by a theorizing about what must have been true, on the assumption that all ancient religions, including that of the Hebrews, were natural religions. No special revelations from God then were made.

Nothing is more obvious in the study of the history of the Israelites than that there is not only a clear distinction, but an antagonism between what the religious leaders of the people taught, and what the people generally believed and practised. It is claimed that the Semites were preeminently religious by nature, and that the Israelites, in particular, were monotheistic. It is evident that other peoples besides the Semites were religious, if not even more so than they. And it would be difficult to show why the Israelites attained to more pure and higher religious ideas than others. As to the claim that this people was naturally monotheistic, according to the records left by them there was no time in their history when they were not persistently inclined to idolatry, worshiping the many gods of their neighbors. They were naturally polytheistic.[1]

The teaching of their religious leaders, prophets and others, in marked contrast with the practise of the people, was preeminently monotheistic from the first, and presented an ever-increasing clearness of views of the true God, and a more and more full unfolding of his character. And the character of God is shown, not only in what the prophets taught and in what the law implied, but also in what God did to and for his people as recorded in their history. The religious ideas of the prophets then could not have grown out of the popular conceptions about God, and could not have resulted from the undirected struggles of the Israelites to reach high ideas of God.

[1] Deut. 9:24; 1 Sam. 8:8; Amos 5:25, 26.

III. Relation of the Old Testament to the New

The Bible, including both Testaments, is one unit. The New when written did not take the place of the Old. The latter was not made obsolete by the fuller and more clear teachings of the New. Nor were the teachings of the older Scriptures shown to be erroneous by the teachings of the newer. There was an advance in the presentation of the doctrines of the Bible, but what was taught in the earlier writings was not condemned in the later. Whatever may be said of the inability of the early Israelites to comprehend the deeper truths of religion, it is not apparent that they were more dense mentally than the mass of men in modern times.

On the other hand, it is not true that all Biblical truths were given in completeness in the earlier Scriptures. In some sense it may be affirmed that the gospel is found in the Law, but it is not there in such measure as to preclude the need of writing the gospel as we have it in the New Testament.

The Old Testament is not a record of God's preparing a people to receive the coming Messiah. If it were, it would appear that such preparation failed of its purpose, for the Jews did not receive the Messiah when he came. The Old Testament is meant rather to aid in understanding the need of a Saviour, and to give some ideas beforehand of his person and work. As such it is just as needful today as ever, and will be needful as long as men need a Saviour. Those who find the teachings of the Old Testament to be in conflict with those of the New misunderstand the real character and purpose of the Old. It is easy to find in these older Scriptures both precepts and records of conduct seemingly antagonistic to some of the teachings of the New Testament. But it is unfair to take these instances out of their proper setting, and then exaggerate their meaning to such an extent as to show that they are condemned by what is taught in the later Scriptures. The Old Testament is properly considered only when it is taken as a part of the whole Bible, each part being complementary to every other, and not regarded as a tentative Bible to be superseded when a better one should be made. The awfulness of sin is presupposed in the offer of a Saviour.

IV. Historicity of the Early Accounts of the Bible

There is no reason for regarding the accounts in the first chapters of Genesis as mythical, nor for making them of little worth by calling them legendary. Nor does the form of the accounts favor the allegorical view. It all seems intended as plain history. The supreme position of man in the Biblical account from the very first is in accord with all that has been discovered thus far by archæological research. As far back as the doings of man have been traced his intelligence has been manifested, and his distinct character as above all else of creation on the earth has been proved. The question of chronology need not disturb us until the age of man on the earth has been proved to be too long to accord with the Biblical record fairly interpreted. And it is a matter of interpretation, since no definite chronological data are given in the early record. The claim that there could not have been accurate records from the earliest times can no longer be maintained in view of what has been discovered in the lands of ancient peoples.

V. History or Allegory?

Besides the view of some that the account we have of the incidents in the garden of Eden is either a myth, or at least, mere legend, it is interpreted by some not as real history, but as allegory. The meaning of the allegory, of course, will be determined by the one who interprets it as such, and not at all from the account

itself. But if the first of the account is allegorical, where does history begin? It is true that the account is not an ordinary one. It may not be matched in any any other part of the Bible. But that is not proof that it is not historical.

One has said that we cannot suppose that "God performed a surgical operation" taking a rib from man to form the woman. The story should not be made ridiculous, nor turned into a caricature, by putting into it what is not there. We might also say that we can hardly suppose God acted as a mason, or a sculptor fashioning man from the dust. We may understand the whole as a real historical fact without thinking it to be beneath the dignity of God. To make the woman from Adam's rib would be no more unimaginable than to make a human being out of carbon, hydrogen, oxygen, and nitrogen. We might call that the act of a druggist assisted by a molder of clay.

VI. Relation of the Biblical and Babylonian Accounts

There have been found among the great mass of Assyrian and Babylonian records tablets containing accounts of a creation and of a flood that are supposed to be closely related to what we have in Genesis. Admittedly there is some correspondence between these, yet the similarity is confined to a very few parts of the records found, and the similarity is discovered only after a close scrutiny, and can be recognized after it has been pointed out as such. This is true of the

general subject-matter. When the character of the two accounts is considered the similarity approaches the vanishing-point. There is almost nothing in common to the two. The one is monotheistic, the other polytheistic. The one is dignified, exalted, and sublime in thought and form, the other childish, debased, absurd. The obvious purpose of the one is to show the relation of God to the universe and man, the other to show how some of the gods quarreled among themselves over man.

It is possible that there is some historical connection between these two sets of accounts, but it would tax the acutest imagination to see that the Biblical accounts were derived from the others. Even were it admitted that the Biblical originated to some extent from the other records, that would not disprove the inspiration of the account we have. The inspiration of any part of the history is not less because of the nature of the source of information that the author may have had. Some other parts of the Old Testament were got from the experience of the writer, or from what he had been told by others. What he wrote was what the Holy Spirit wanted him to write.

See Hasting's *Dictionary of the Bible,* art. "Cosmogony"; Clay, *Light on the Old Testament,* p. 59; Lange's *Commentary on Genesis,* p. 166; Price, *Monuments and the Old Testament.*

VII. Antiquity of Writing

Objection to the Mosaic authorship and to the Mosaic date of the Pentateuch was formerly urged on the

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assumption that writing was not practised by any people in such early times. But proof has been got from explorations in Oriental lands that men did write as many centuries before the time of Moses as have passed since his day, if not even longer. This proof is incontrovertible, as it is furnished in the original inscriptions on rocks and on clay tablets, and not in manuscripts that are copies of the original, which might belong to much later times. And there have been found not only meager inscriptions on monuments, but literatures belonging to times much earlier than the time of the exodus and the days of Moses. It would be absurd to suppose that the Israelites, surrounded by peoples eminently literary, and without question as mentally capable as these others, were, alone of all, unable to write, and indifferent about the advantages to be had in writing. Not only Egypt on the one side of Israel's history and Assyria on the other have furnished the explorer with whole libraries on almost all sorts of subjects, but even China, until recently supposed to be smothered in savage ignorance while all the rest of the world was advancing in civilization, as early as the days of Moses "had laws and literature excelling anything that proud Egypt had produced," and "state-conducted schools over fifteen hundred years before Christ, ranging from lower grades on to universities." In view of the world-wide influence which the writings of the Israelites have had on the literatures of practically all the other peoples of the earth that are called civilized, it can hardly be

supposed that they remained sunken below all the rest in literary activity until comparatively recent times.

All this may be said as mere supposition. But as a fact, nothing has been discovered, either within the writings of the Israelites or outside of them, that proves them to be of a late date only. The contention that they are late is based upon ungrounded assumptions. Recent discoveries in the Orient prove that the Hebrew language was in the written form as early as the days of Abraham, and thus the assertion that the books of the Bible could not have been written originally in that language is shown to be baseless.

See Zerbe, *Antiquity of Hebrew Language and Literature.*

VIII. Antiquity of Man

It is commonly said now by those who are studying the history of life on the earth and the history of rocks that there is evidence that men of some degree of intelligence and of likeness to men of today have existed on the earth for an indefinite number of hundreds of thousands of years. The limits of time within which the first men are placed are not very exact, varying by millions of years, according to the different authorities. At present it seems obvious that means of accurate reckoning are not available. Whether the fossils found are to determine the age of the rocks in which they occur, or the rocks are to determine the age of the fossils is a disputed question. And there is even lack of agreement about the genuineness of the sup-

posed relics of historic man, and the precise place in the earth's rock development that these relics occupied. Until there is greater unanimity of opinion among the students of the physical sciences there will be no pressing need of attempting to harmonize views got from the study of the Scriptures with the so-called "scientific" views.

Besides, the writers of the Scriptures do not attempt to state how long man has been on the earth since first created. While the length of the lives of some men, and the length of the reigns of some kings are given, it is not at all certain that the numbers given cover the entire list of the generations of man, or the whole period of the reign of a king. The term "son," for example, is often used of a descendant however remote. The numbers in the Hebrew text may have been indicated by letters, as with us, instead of being written out in full. And as some of the letters are so much alike, it would have been easy to mistake one for another. In some cases a letter that really belonged to a word in the account has been taken as standing for a number. It is also a fact that the numbers given in the Hebrew text are not always in agreement with those found in the Greek translation. It is probable that the Greek is less reliable than the Hebrew text.

See Clay, *Light on the Old Testament*, p. 50.

IX. Creation or Evolution

It is not always easy to determine how the term "evolution" is used in many cases. Frequently it is

equivalent to the term development. If the idea of evolution means that there was at the beginning, however remote that beginning may have been, a simple cell, and from this there have been evolved all the various forms of organic life that have appeared on the earth, from the jellyfish to man, and that this evolution has taken place without the intervention of any outside force at any time during the process, it is obvious that such an idea, or theory, is not in accord with the statements of the Scriptures.

The Hebrew word to "create" is not used in the Old Testament of any one but God as its subject. From a study of its occurrence it seems to mean "bringing into existence what did not exist before." The method or means of this is not indicated. In the second chapter of Genesis, where the word "to make" is used instead of "create," it is said God made man out of the dust of the earth. Whether the "dust" was in its elementary condition, or in organisms that had already manifested life, is not determined by the expression. But it is certain that when man was created, or made, he was in an essential sense distinct from all other created things, even living things. He may have possessed some characteristics in common with some other living things, but he possessed that which distinguished him from all the rest. The expressions "in our image" and "according to our likeness," were not applicable to any other object of creation. All the other forms of animal life were produced according to their kind, or species, while man

was made according to the species of God, if the term may be permissible.

This fact that man was in the image of God is one of the basic Biblical truths. Its meaning may be best understood as referring to his personality, he being a person as God is a Person, and this involving the fact of moral character. Man did not lose this image when he sinned, as is shown in Genesis 9:6, where murder is prohibited because man is in the image of God. This truth gives ground for encouragement in preaching to men, since they possess God's image, even if blurred.

X. The "Day" of Creation

It is asserted that the word "day" used in the account of creation means twenty-four hours, and to give it any other meaning is to pervert the Scriptures in order to avoid a difficulty. Scientists claim that the history of the world had lasted many thousands of years, if not millions, before man appeared on the earth, and that the account in Genesis cannot therefore be true.

As a matter of fact, the word "day" is used in three different senses in the first and second chapters of Genesis.[1] First, it is used of the period of light as distinguished from the darkness; second, it is used of each separate creative period, whether of twenty-four hours, or an indefinitely long time, and third, it is used of the entire time of the creation, whatever its length. Which of these meanings is to be understood in the case of

each separate period, must be determined by the context. It is not a perversion of the Scriptures to say it means an indefinite period in the first chapter, rather than twenty-four hours. That it does mean a long period is indicated by the fact that the seventh day has no evening and morning. The creation that ceased on that day has not been resumed, so that the day of "rest" still continues. This is implied in what Jesus said about his Father's resting, yet working.[2]

Whether the creative acts were instantaneous, or involved a long process, is not clearly shown by the record, but there are many things that indicate a process of time and progress in the production of the various objects of creation. Thus on the third day vegetation is said to have been produced in a manner such as we see it now. It is claimed that it required sixty thousand years to produce man on the earth. It would be as easy to say sixty millions; and the one guess would be as likely to be true as the other. Of course it cannot be proved from the narrative that man was created instantaneously, and that he was not evolved gradually from some lower form of animal life. But whatever the length of time, or whatever the process, there was a time when man appeared, and he differed from all that existed besides, for he was in the "image of God," and that was true of nothing else. There is, however, not the least indication that man arose from a process of evolution. And so far as any evidence from explorations is concerned, as soon as man appeared on the earth he was endowed

with abilities comparable with those man possesses now. He was a man, not an animal only. These facts are in accord with what the Bible indicates—creation, not evolution.

[1] Gen. 1:5, 8; 2:4.
[2] John 5:17; Heb. 4:3, 4.
H. B. D., art. "Cosmogony"; Boardman, *Creative Week;* Lange, *Commentary on Genesis,* p. 166.

XI. God Clothing Adam

Quite clearly the purpose of making clothing for Adam and Eve could not have been because they would need protection from the elements when they were outside of the garden, and that they would not be able to make these for themselves. Other things besides clothing would also be needed which were not furnished for him. It seems evident that the act of clothing man had some special significance. The Hebrew word translated "to make atonement" literally means "to cover," and "atonement" a "covering." It seems to be likely that the covering by the skins of an animal symbolized the covering of man's guilt from the sight of God, and probably the skins used were taken from animals offered in sacrifice. As was indicated later in the Levitical laws the blood of the sacrifice when presented at the altar, having in it the life of the animal, covered over the guilty life of the offerer. Here the fact of covering was more fully shown than in the presentation of the blood only.

See Lev. 17:10-14.

XII. Awfulness of Sin Emphasized in the Old Testament

The general theme of the Bible is the redemption of man from sin and its consequences. But before the offer of a Redeemer should be made there was need of showing that man needed a Redeemer. Hence we have the early and continued sinfulness of man presented with special emphasis, particularly in the first part of the Old Testament. To say that the two Testaments are not in accord because the New does not emphasize sin as does the Old shows a lack of understanding of the mutual relation of the two. The charge of sin must precede the offer to forgive it, and obviously it was not necessary continually to repeat the charge with unceasing severity. Sin is condemned also in the New Testament, and God's mercy is offered in the strongest terms in the Old. When one realizes, even partially, the character of sin as it must appear in God's sight, one cannot insist that its punishment in the instances recorded was severe. The first chapters of Genesis make the blackness of sin most prominent.

XIII. Cain's Sin and Punishment

After God had pronounced the punishment that would come upon Cain, he said, " My punishment is greater that I can bear." Some translate the Hebrew, " My sin is greater than can be forgiven." While this translation is possible, the context does not favor it.

Cain does not show that he feels himself a sinner. The word translated "punishment" has three meanings: A wrong act; the guilt resulting from the act, and the punishment for the wrong. Quite clearly it has the third meaning here. The same word occurs in Isaiah 53:6, 11, where it is translated "iniquity." But it rather means "punishment." This Christ bore for the sinner. Cain was to be driven from the presence of God, which can only mean access to God. He could not get away from the presence of God. David, after his sin, prayed that he might not be debarred from access to God, as Cain was. (Ps. 51:11.)

XIV. Extent of the Deluge

The words used in the account of the flood are to be interpreted in accord with the entire account. And to interpret does not mean to twist the language to make it harmonize with facts got from other sources. The words "all" and "every," as used in some other places in the Bible, cannot be understood in their literal sense. The account of the flood as a whole must determine whether all the mountains were covered by the water, and whether every animal of the whole world entered the ark. Since the ark grounded on the very day that the waters reached their greatest depth, before they had diminished at all, and since the depth of the water above the highest mountain was then fifteen cubits, even if the ark rested on the peak of Ararat, which is not stated, and is not probable, there were many mountains in other parts of the world higher

than Ararat, and hence not covered. The facts given show that the word "all" is to be taken in a limited sense.

If now it should be proved that there were peoples in other parts of the world at the time of the flood that were not affected by it, this would not prove that the Biblical account is wrong. The expressed purpose of the flood was, not to have every foot of the earth covered by water, but to destroy men because of their wickedness, and this, in order to teach that God would punish sin persisted in. This lesson would be taught even if the flood were limited in extent, and only part of the race destroyed. The teaching did not depend upon the number that perished.

The view that the account is composed of two separate documents, that are not only different, but mutually contradictory, is reached by putting a meaning upon some parts unwarranted, and thus making them conflict with other parts. For example, it is said that Noah in one place was commanded to take two of every kind of animals into the ark, and in another place he was to take seven. But where the sevens are named it is added, "male and his female," thus showing that the "sevens" were seven pairs, and not individuals. It is then in full accord with the command to take "two." Besides it should be noted, that if the account consists of two mutually contradictory documents, it is remarkable that the editor who pieced them did not avoid joining what the critics so easily find to be contradictory. The assumed "editor" is

sometimes credited with excessive acuteness, while at other times he shows himself to have been extremely dense, and lacking in ordinary sense.

See Gen. 41:57; Joel 2:28; Matt. 3:5; 2 Cor. 15:22. H. B. D., art. "Flood."

XV. The Call of Abraham and the Promises Made to Him

Abraham was called to leave his own land and kindred and to go to a land that should belong to him and his descendants, who should be God's special people under his special care. But it was not for their sakes alone that he was to be separated from others. The purpose of the call was made known to Abraham at the outset. It was that through him all the nations of the earth should be blessed. The idea quite prevalent that God cared for the Israelites only during the Old Testament period is shown to be wrong by this announcement made to Abraham. Not only were his descendants, God's chosen people, to be entrusted with the oracles of God (Rom. 3:2), but also by God's dealings with them a knowledge of the true God would be made known to others.

Abraham was assured that he would become a great nation. This promise was repeated to Isaac (Gen. 17:18) and to Jacob. (Gen. 28:13-15.) Abraham was further told that the land of Canaan would be given to him and his seed. (Gen. 12:7; 13:15.) The fulfilment of the purpose of calling Abraham was to be realized in his seed, which was to be as the stars

of the heavens for number. (Gen. 15:5.) Abraham's special relation to God was determined by his faith. (Gen. 15:6.) According to Paul's interpretation of this term "seed," being in the singular, it meant Christ, and through him all who should have faith as Abraham had faith. (Gal. 3:16, 29.) All such are heirs of the promise. Evidently more than the mere possession of the land of Canaan was involved in the call of Abraham. The purpose was wider than the Jews, and greater than earthly possessions.

XVI. Amraphel's Campaign in Canaan

Amraphel mentioned in Genesis 14 has been identified with Hammurabi, the king of Mesopotamia whose code of laws on the stele found in Persia shows the great advance in civilization at that early period. The history got from the Assyrian records is quite in accord with what we find in this remarkable chapter. Having the Biblical account of the times of Abraham only, one might get the idea that he was the first who ever made the journey from the valley of the Euphrates to the land of Canaan. But the subjugation of all the region of Syria began long before the days of Abraham. The Eastern rulers had overrun and made spoil of all that part of the world during as many centuries the other side of Abraham as we are this side. Counting back nineteen hundred years to the beginning of the Christian era, and adding another nineteen hundred back to the days of Abraham, we still need to add another nineteen hundred to get

to Sargon the great ruler who held sway over all the lands from his own proper domains to the Mediterranean. Indeed we have to lay down our measuring-line twice more before we reach the time when these Eastern rulers were first dominant over this part of the world. Compared with these ancient kings, Abraham seems to belong to our own times. He is modern, not ancient.

It should not be overlooked that the campaign of Chedorlaomer and his allies was undertaken for the purpose of punishing those who had stopped paying tribute to these rulers. The same motive was the urge of practically all the wars of those early times. Armies were sent against other countries either to collect tribute, or to get plunder, or to punish those who had failed to pay the accustomed tribute to the kings who had conquered them.

XVII. Theophanies

Opinions differ about the interpretation of the passages which state that God appeared to men. Some hold that there was no actual appearance; some that it was an angel that appeared, and not God; and some that it was really God, whether it was the second Person of the Trinity or not. In these statements of appearances three different names are used, at times all on one occasion. The names are: God, Jehovah, and the Angel of Jehovah. In Genesis 48:15, 16, the Angel of Jehovah is identified with God. So also in Exodus 3:2, 4, 6.

It is claimed that there could not have been an appearance of God, because it is said, "No man can see my face and live" (Exod. 33:20). But it is evident that if the one who said this was God he was there to say it, and was heard if not seen. And so there was a real theophany. Some of the passages stating that God appeared, on any reasonable interpretation, can be understood of a real theophany only. Because there are these instances of such appearances we can the more easily believe that God was incarnate in Jesus Christ.

See Gen. 3:8; 12:7; 17:1; 18:1, 22, 23; 22:16; 32; 48:15; Exod. 3:2, 4, 6; 24:10; 33:20; 34:5; Num. 12:8; Deut. 4:12; Josh. 5:13; Judg. 6:12, 22.

XVIII. The Purpose of the General Divisions of the Old Testament

The theme of the Old Testament is that of the entire Bible—Redemption. The purpose and promise of this runs through all the Bible from Genesis to Revelation. We should not expect to find this so clearly stated in the early part of the Bible as in the later parts, which were written when the full meaning of redemption could be better comprehended. But the unity of the Bible, which is shown in various ways, is secured by this one theme which permeates it. That the redemption was to be through one Person, distinct from all others of earth, One afterward characterized as the Messiah, is shown with increasing clearness in the successive periods of Old Testament

writing, particulary in the Prophets.[1] We can understand the real purport of the separate books of the Old Testament only as they are viewed in relation to this central, dominant theme.

In the Pentateuch the purpose of redemption is connected with a people to whom it was revealed, and through whom it was to be promulgated. Each of these five books is concerned with this people chosen for this purpose. Abraham and his descendants were not selected from all other nations of the earth because they were better than the rest, or because they alone were to be saved in this redemptive work, but they were called that through them the oracles of God might be given to all the world. This purpose is announced at the call of Abraham, and is the basis of Paul's assurance that his own work among the Gentiles was connected with the eternal purpose of God.[2]

Genesis sets forth the preparation for the special selection of this people in the records of the lives of the Patriarchs.

The central thought of Exodus is the covenant at Sinai, by which Israel was made the chosen people of God for his redemptive purpose. All that we have in this book centers about Sinai. What precedes prepares for this act at Sinai, and all that follows is consequent upon that covenant.

In Leviticus emphasis is put upon the fact that this chosen people was to be a holy people. We have here the ceremonies of this holy people as they worshiped the holy God, their sacrifices, and their feasts.

Numbers shows how the lack of belief led to the punishment of the whole nation. As they had not believed God, nor trusted him to help them win their land, they were condemned to wander in the wilderness till death, instead of entering Canaan.

Deuteronomy emphasizes the obligation to obey absolutely God who had chosen them to be his.

The Historical Books trace the course of this people in gaining the land of Canaan, and of their conduct during the subsequent centuries—their persistent sinning and their punishment and repentance—until at last they were taken from their land into captivity, from which some only returned.

The Prophets give the messages intended to recall the people from their apostasy from Jehovah, who had redeemed them from Egypt.

The Poetical Books consist for the most part of the expressions of the experiences of those who had accepted the teachings of the Law and the Prophets into their own lives, and who had themselves had the help of God in their dangers and his blessing for their fidelity.

[1] Isa. 7:14; 9:6, 7; 11:1-5; 10:4; 53:1-12; Zech. 6:12, 13.
[2] Gen. 12:3; Rom. 3:1, 2; Gal. 3:3.

XIX. Date and Authorship of the Pentateuch

Moses has been regarded as the author of these books from the earliest times. But as the result of critical study of their contents it has come to be claimed that they were not written—at least in their

present form, and so far as their chief contents are concerned—until several centuries later than the time that Moses was supposed to have lived. There is no specific statement in the books themselves that Moses did write all of them, though it is said that he wrote parts of them.[1] But the view that one would get from reading them, without any previous opinion about their authorship, would be that Moses could have been their author, at least. The fundamental reason for denying that they were the work of Moses, or that they belong to the age of Moses, is got from the assumption that the religion of Israel was developed gradually like all other ancient religions, and that the development was so regular that the time when any belief was held can be determined by its relative position in the whole series of beliefs. It is claimed that certain doctrines—most of them—originated in the ages far later than the days of Moses, but that the writers of the Pentateuch assigned them to the earlier times. The narrative parts were but the imagined settings of the laws given. Very naturally it is insisted that these writings cannot be regarded as trustworthy history if they were produced so long a time after the events described. If this late date be assumed it cannot be fairly objected that this conclusion is wrong. One would not have confidence in the trustworthiness of the writings of any one today who attempted to describe events occurring seven centuries ago, unless the writer had documents for his confirmation accepted as reliable. But it is denied that the

writers of the Pentateuch had documents dating from the time of the events recorded, except some possible fragments. Hence the claim that these writings, laws, and narratives are only imagined.[2]

[1] Exod. 24:4; Deut. 31:9-13, 22.
[2] Kuenen, *Religion of Israel.*

XX. Stages of Old Testament Criticism

There was first the "literary" criticism, by which the attempt was made to divide the text among various authors according to the words and phrases each was said to have used. By this method not only were divisions made by chapters, but by paragraphs, and even by verses. Most of this work was evidently arbitrary, and often when words that were said to be characteristic of one writer were found in passages assigned to another, these were attributed to the editor or editors, whom the critics invented to explain many facts that would have been inexplicable without such invention. Those claiming that they were able to dissect a text in such manner have been unwilling to be put to the test to determine which of two collaborating authors still living wrote any selected passage.

The second period was the "historical." In this work the various codes supposed to be found in the Pentateuch were assigned to those periods in the history of the Israelites in which according to the account given emphasis was put upon the chief contents of these codes. If the separated part did not fit into its place exactly, it was smoothed down until it did fit,

any rejected fragments being held as the work of other writers or of the editors. If such a test were applied to the teachings of the New Testament that have been especially emphasized in the different centuries of the Christian era, it would be found that some parts of the New Testament were written, say, in the days of Luther; some much later, and some not written yet, as the injunctions are not followed by some professed Christians.

The third period was the "religious" criticism. Some of those doing the principal work in this part of criticism are inclined to treat with indifference, if not with contempt, the claims of the "literary" critics. The underlying assumption in this stadium of criticism is that the religion of the Israelites was a natural one, like all other religions of ancient times. Everything of a supernatural character is therefore rejected as having no basis in fact. Miracles are denied, first, because the account of them is so much later than the time of their supposed occurrence we cannot admit the narrative to be reliable; second, because God would not himself violate the laws he had instituted, and third, because we have never seen a miracle, therefore no one else ever did see one. This third period of criticism is the most important of them all. The supreme question is, Was the religion of Israel revealed or not? Did God make himself known to men of old in a special manner, as here affirmed, revealing his nature and his will concerning man?

See H. B. D. "Hexateuch" and authors cited there.

XXI. The Historical Books of the Old Testament

These books that we call "historical" are called the "Former Prophets" in the Hebrew Bible. The term "prophet" was probably given to them because they were supposed to have been written by members of the prophetic class. In any case, the character of their contents manifests the prophetic spirit. While some claim that they were not composed according to the modern scientific method of writing history, since they do not give fully the events of the times described, it is yet evident that the writers had definite purposes in mind when they wrote these books, and that they kept strictly to such purposes in selecting their material. Much of what we should like to know is omitted from the text, but there is no attempt to give an incorrect view of the events of the period by the selections made.[1] In this respect they are like the best modern historians.

The object of these books is clearly to teach religious lessons. The will of God concerning his people is as evidently shown here as in the Law or the Prophets. His hatred of sin is emphasized as strongly, and his readiness to forgive on repentance is made as clear. This is shown by what God did to and for his people. They were blessed when obedient, and punished when they rebelled against his will. Such blessings and such punishments are not to be taken as the standard by which God will deal with nations now, for these instances in the history of Israel were intended as

lessons for all time and are recorded for our admonition.[2]

Because errors are found in these historical books, as when there are mutual contradictions between Samuel and Chronicles, or in cases where the record found in them is contradicted by testimony got from outside sources clearly reliable, they have been said to be untrustworthy, and are therefore to be accepted as ordinary literature only, and in character like all other ancient literatures, and their inspiration is consequently denied. It should be noted, however, that most of the errors found are in the case of numbers given. And this may be perhaps fully explained on the assumption that numbers were indicated by the use of a letter, instead of writing it out in full, either in the original writings, or in copies made from these later. This would be the same method as with us when we use an X, or a V, or an L for ten, five, and fifty. And since some of the Hebrew letters are so alike in form, it would have been easy for a copyist to mistake one for another. Some of the apparent contradictions are not really such, as the statements are made from different points of view. In some cases the Hebrew text is manifestly corrupt, a fact easily understood when its age is considered, and the difficulty of transmission through the centuries fully appreciated.[3]

[1] Especially the contents of Kings and Chronicles.
[2] 1 Cor. 10:11.
[3] See Driver's *Critical Notes on Samuel.*

XXII. The Prophetic Books

Following the record of the establishing of the Israelites as God's people, and the history of their frequent apostasy and punishment, given in the Historical Books, the next division of the Old Testament contains the messages delivered by the prophets in the attempt to keep the people faithful to Jehovah and to the purpose for which they were called. There is actually not so much of new truth found in these prophetic writings as there is of reproof for falling away from Jehovah and sinning against him. It is assumed throughout the Prophets that the people already knew the laws of God and what he demanded of them. The work of the prophets was chiefly to turn the Israelites back to God who had redeemed them.

The view that the prophets were especially engaged in promulgating new truths among the people—in revealing to them ideas of God not before known—is not in accord with the messages themselves. It is rather taken for granted that the fundamental truths about the character of God, and what he demanded of his people had already been made known. And their sin is counted all the greater because they did know something about God and what he had done for them. It is true, however, that the prophets do develop these fundamental truths, and present higher and clearer conceptions of the character of Jehovah.

See Isaiah, chs. 1 and 5; Jeremiah, chs. 2, 3, 4; Ezekiel, chs. 3, 4, 5; Hosea, chs. 1, 2; Amos, chs. 1, 2; Habakkuk and Zephaniah.

XXIII. The Poetic Books

The books in this third division of the Old Testament are not the same in the Hebrew and English Bible. The Hebrew included some of the books that we call historical, and they were not called "poetic books," but the "Writings." And in the Hebrew Bible what we call the "Prophets" are called the "Late Prophets" as distinguished from the "Early Prophets," i. e., our historical books. The book of Daniel is also put with the "Writings." But this cannot be because its prophetic character was denied, but perhaps because of its late date; though no satisfactory explanation has been given.

While in the Law, the History, and the Prophets we have God speaking to man, in the poetic books we have for the most part man speaking to God. These express deep religious convictions, the outgrowth of what had been learned in their other Scriptures, and what they had themselves experienced in their own relation to God. These writings, however, especially the Psalms, contain teachings that are of permanent value, and that have been perpetually prized.

XXIV. The Purpose of Taking Israel Into Egypt

It is clearly indicated by the events that led to Jacob's going into Egypt, where Joseph had already gone to prepare the way, that it was desirable that the Israelites should be out of the land of Canaan for a time. If they should remain in that land there was

danger of their intermarrying with the Canaanites, and of thus losing their identity as a separate people. The history of Judah's sons shows this. Or they would have adopted the religion of the Canaanites; or, if they had maintained their isolation, and retained the hope of possessing the land where they dwelt as their own, they would have met the hostility of the Canaanites and in all probability would have perished. They were not exposed to either of these dangers in Egypt. They were too different in race and religion to be absorbed by Egypt. And the Egyptians had no fear of their taking their land.

The most important reason for taking Israel into Egypt seems to have been to redeem them from Egypt. This not only gave occasion to prove that Jehovah was the true God, not Egypt's idols, but it was the background of all God's subsequent dealings with his people. Their obligation to render a loyal service to him was based on this fundamental fact. Their redemption demanded love and service.

Genesis, ch. 38; Exodus 5:4; 7:5; Hosea 11:1.

XXV. Israel's Condition in Egypt

The Israelites seem to have dwelt for the most part by themselves in Egypt. They could gather in assemblies when there was occasion for it. They no doubt kept up some forms of family conditions. Pharaoh's attempt to limit their power did not involve making them slaves to individual Egyptians. They had to work for the government. They have been

called "A horde of slaves escaping from centuries of bondage." But they were not a horde, they were not slaves—in the usual sense of the word, and they were not in bondage for centuries. Pharaoh's oppression did not last over one hundred years at the most. It began but a short time before the birth of Moses, and he was eighty years old at the time of the exodus. There is no evidence that the Israelite families were broken up by the labor they were required to do. They were working for the government, and doing piece-work. When the required number of brick were made they could go home. According to Milman the Israelites were in a higher state of civilization at the time of the exodus than at any other period of their history, with the possible exception of the times of David and Solomon.

Exodus 4:20. Milman, *History of the Jews*, vol. 1, p. 181, n.; Petrie, *History of Egypt*, vols. 1 and 2; H. D. B., art. "Egypt"; Winckler, *Tel-el-amarna Tablets*.

XXVI. The Conflict with Egypt

Most of the plagues were intended to show that Jehovah, God of the Hebrews, was the true God. When Moses demanded that Pharaoh let the Israelites go out of the land, he told him that it was because Jehovah their God had commanded it. The king said he did not know Jehovah, and would not let them go. The events that followed were to convince him that Jehovah was God. Whether Pharaoh came to believe this or not, the fact would be proved for all

subsequent generations. It must be borne in mind that if these doctrines about God had not thus been taught we should be in ignorance concerning them. They are now commonplace with us. They were not then.

XXVII. The Ten Plagues

While the plagues may in some cases seem similar to what has been observed in Egypt at other times, calamities arising from natural causes—as the insects, the locusts, the condition of the Nile—that does not disprove the miraculous in this account. The miraculous is not to be restricted to creating something new, or producing an effect that appears in conflict with the laws of nature, but it is also to be seen in producing what may already exist at a time designated, and not in the ordinary course of events. It is not difficult to explain much that has been termed miraculous in accordance with natural causes only, if we endeavor to do so, and are indifferent to the Biblical record itself. By some even the bare ground of the Red Sea was not the result of anything miraculous, but due only to a strong wind added to any ordinary low tide. Moses is supposed to have calculated when the tide would be lowest, and timed the journey of his people accordingly. Of course he needed to calculate for the Egyptians' timely arrival also.

XXVIII. The Request Made of Pharaoh

Moses was not to ask for a final departure of the Israelites, but that they might go a three-days' jour-

ney into the wilderness to worship. Did he then intend to deceive the king? He did not ask for very much. The request was a slight one. And it was a religious one. If Pharaoh refused he would show his opposition to Jehovah more clearly than if the demand were for a greater sacrifice. For him to object to losing the labor of this people even for a few days would not have been unreasonable, for economical reasons. But to refuse the request to worship made the conflict a religious one.

For the Israelites to worship in the land of Egypt could have been interpreted as a recognition of Egypt's gods, as each land was supposed to have its own gods, and that others would not be worshiped within their territory. A similar reason led Naaman to ask for some earth to take with him on his return from Palestine, that the altar to be placed on it might be understood as an altar to Jehovah.

XXIX. Hardening of Pharaoh's Heart

There are two Hebrew words that are translated "to harden," one meaning to make heavy, the other to make firm, or unyielding. It is not said that God hardened the king's heart until the sixth plague. Pharaoh had shown himself opposed to what God demanded, he was defiantly stubborn. Then he was made firm in this attitude by Jehovah himself. He was not compelled to act contrary to his own inclination.

It has been denied that the account can be true, for it is said God would not harden his heart. Thus it is

regarded as merely an Old Testament way of speaking of the event. For the Israelites were accustomed to ascribe all phenomena to God, especially anything unusual. But Paul, in the epistle to the Romans, teaches what the Old Testament here teaches. So it is not an incorrect view belonging to early days, but is a Biblical view given in the New Testament.

See Exodus 4: 21; 9:13; Romans 9:18; Cambridge Bible, *Ezekiel*, p. xxxiv; Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Pentateuch*, vol. 1, p. 453; Godet, *Commentary on Romans*, p. 353.

XXX. Death of the Firstborn

The firstborn of the Egyptians were put to death in that last determining plague not because they were thought of most highly by their parents, but because they represented the whole family. Their destruction corresponded to the redemption of the firstborn of the Israelites. (Exod. 13: 15.) The dedication of the firstborn of the Israelites showed that the entire people belonged to God, a holy people. The idea is the same as in the case of the first-fruits. If the first-fruits were holy, the whole lump was holy. (Rom. 11: 16.) There is a corresponding instance in the destruction of Jericho, the first city taken by the Israelites in the conquest of Canaan. The destruction of the first showed that all deserved destruction. (John 6: 17, 24.)

XXXI. Borrowing from the Egyptians

It is said that the Hebrews deceived the Egyptians when they borrowed from them, as they did not in-

tend to return what they got. The word translated "borrow" means properly to "ask." One instance only seems to demand the translation "borrow." (2 Kings 6: 5.) It is true that the Israelites did not expect to return to Egypt, neither did the Egyptians expect them to do so, and they gave freely to the Israelites what they asked for in order to get rid of them, and as soon as possible. The term "spoiled" can only mean that they took from them so much that it was like a spoiling of a captured city, or the booty of a conquered army. There was no force used. The Egyptians gave gladly. There is no ground for saying that God gave the Israelites "spoil" as wages for their labor.

XXXII. Pharaoh at the Red Sea

There has been a good deal of controversy concerning the date of the exodus, and consequently concerning the Pharaoh who was king at that time. If it was Merenpthah of the nineteenth dynasty, whose mummy has been recovered, is the Biblical account to be understood as representing that the king was drowned with his army in the Red Sea, and if so, is it an error? It is worth nothing that the Bible omits to say that Pharaoh was drowned, and if he were, we might have expected to find it so reported, either in the prose account of the event, or in the song of Miriam after the crossing. Nor is the poetical account of the event, given in Psalm 136: 15, to be understood as meaning that Pharaoh himself was drowned. The

word here used means "shaken off." It does not say precisely what happened to either him or his host.

See also Psalm 106:11; cf. Isaiah, ch. 12; Revelation 15:3.

XXXIII. Giving of the Manna

When the Israelites found the manna on the ground they did not know what it was, hence called it "Manna," meaning, What? By the supply of this day by day in a miraculous manner, the people were to understand that they were not dependent on what they had been using ordinarily, or what they might secure in the usual manner, but on what God would directly furnish for them. The statement "not to live by bread alone" cannot mean that they would not need physical food, but spiritual, for the manna was physical. When Jesus used this in his reply to Satan the words had the same meaning. He would depend upon what God would give out of the ordinary way, but would give, and so he would depend upon him. (Deut. 8:3; cf. Matt. 4:4.)

XXXIV. The Covenant at Sinai

The central fact, not only of the book of Exodus, but of the whole Pentateuch, is the covenant made at Sinai, by which Israel was taken to be, in a formal way, the chosen people of God. All of the history that we have before that event prepares for it, and all after is in consequence of it.[1] The conditions of the covenant were that the people were to obey all that God should command them, and this they agreed to

do. Thus the foundation of the relation of Jehovah to his people was obedience on the part of the people. On the part of Jehovah, in this mutual agreement, was the promise that they would be his "special possession," translated "peculiar people," above all the other peoples of the earth, though these also belonged to him. In further consequence of this covenant relation Israel was to have access to God, who would dwell among them. There was provided therefore a tent in which God would dwell as they journeyed to the promised land, and a special priesthood, chosen from them all, to stand between God and his worshipers—as only representatives of the whole people were to have immediate access to Jehovah. There was a place of worship and a ritual of worship. One priesthood, one place of worship, and one set of sacrifices, indicating that God had provided a way of approach to him, and but one way, and that man could not provide such way. Men may seek God, but can find him only in the one way he has given; just as the offering of the ram by Abraham in the place of Isaac showed that the Substitute would be provided by God himself, not by man.

[1] Cf. 1 Peter 1:2; 2:5, 9.

On the ceremony of making a covenant, see Genesis 15:9-18; cf. Jeremiah 34:18.

XXXV. The Body of Laws Given to Israel

It is said that it is unlikely that a complete code of laws would have been given to Israel at once, and

XXXVII. Meaning of the Different Sacrifices

Those who say that bloody sacrifices belong only to the time of the childhood of the race, or that they can be acceptable to savages only, miss a basic truth of the Bible—that man is a sinner in the sight of God, and that sin deserves death, but that God in his infinite mercy has provided a substitute for sinful man, One who died for him.

All the sacrifices ordained at Sinai have a significance related to this truth. Each had a special meaning. Taking them in the order in which they would be offered: The sin-offering symbolized expiation of sin, and the offerer was made to stand before God as though he had never sinned. The burnt-offering denoted the dedication of the offerer to God. The meal-offering, that was always to accompany a burnt-offering, though could be offered separately, symbolized the fact that the possessions of the offerer were devoted to God. The peace-offering, which was not to secure peace, but was offered when peace had been secured, was a feast in which man shared with God what was offered. In case of this offering only could the offerer share in the thing offered. Thus was shown emphatically that God and the offerer were at one. Peace-offerings included thank, votive, and free-will offerings. The trespass-offering was to be presented when one committed a sin that brought damage upon God or a man, in which case the damage could be made good. It was a sin-offering plus the idea of restitution.

XXXVIII. The Day of Atonement

The Israelites were expected to offer a sin-offering when a sin had been committed. But as they would not take notice of all sins, there was appointed a special day, with a special service to make atonement for the entire people, that all guilt might be symbolically removed. By this the people should have been impressed with the fact that they were sinners in God's sight, and that sin was not to be overlooked, except by the mercy of God. No day was more impressive than this.

XXXIX. Atonement

The Hebrew word translated " to make atonement " means literally to cover, and this meaning and the fact involved in it should not be denied or ignored, even if this special word does not occur in the fuller development of Biblical teaching in the New Testament. Of course the word is used figuratively, but figures of speech have meanings, and we have to use them still in all discussions of theological truths.

The fact that Christ did more than to cover the repentant sinner, so that he stands in God's sight as clothed in robes of Christ's righteousness, does not annul this fact. New Testament teaching nowhere denies this, though it amplifies much of Christ's work besides. We may deny that we hold any theory of the atonement, but we hold one if we believe that Christ did this for us, though we cannot understand it altogether, nor explain the fact in full.

before they were settled in their land. So it is concluded that these laws must have grown up gradually as they were needed, just as laws did among other peoples of antiquity. But the Hebrews had been accustomed to laws, and to a most advanced system of laws, while they were in Egypt, and they would need a full set of laws for their government when they should enter the land promised, as they expected to do in a short time. It would have been unfortunate for them to have been without such laws to govern them from the first. It is not at all improbable that there were some modifications of the laws during the subsequent generations, yet all that we have in the Pentateuch could have been given at the outset as foreseeing what the people would need in their settled habitation in Canaan. It is also clear that the form of the laws are in accord with the view that they were given before the people reached the land of Canaan. Arguments for and against the claim that the laws were influenced by the laws and customs that prevailed in Egypt have been advanced. In any case there is nothing to indicate that they were given only after the Israelites reached Canaan.[1]

[1] The tablets of the Ten Commandments were written by Jehovah himself. Exodus 24:12; 32:16; 34:1; Deuteronomy 4:13; 5:22; 10:3, 4.

XXXVI. The Sacrifices Ordained at Sinai

Sacrifices no doubt had been offered by other peoples besides the Israelites from the earliest days, but that

does not prove that the sacrifices offered by the Israelites were devised by themselves. There is no reason why God should not make use of means or customs already prevalent among the various nations. Their former use would not deprive them of the significance given to them when enjoined upon the people of God. Sacrifices had been offered by Abraham and his descendants before Israel was chosen at Sinai. Such offerings were added to in the giving of the Law by those that would indicate more clearly the meaning of each special part of the ceremony. The reason for them all grows out of the fact that man is sinful, and that he can approach God in an acceptable manner only after his sin has been forgiven, and approach in the way designated by God himself. The entire series of offerings, ending with the peace-offering, show that man could have intercourse with God, could be admitted into his presence and enjoy his fellowship. Unrestricted access was not yet possible. That would result from the offering of Jesus Christ on the cross as a sacrifice to God. The veil was rent when Christ died.

On the sacrifices generally, see: Boardman, *Ten Commandments;* Price, *Monuments and the Old Testament;* Cave, *Scriptural Doctrine of Sacrifice;* Baxter, *Sanctuary and Sacrifice.* On the order of the offerings, Leviticus 8; 9:8; 14:19. Offerings as "food for God," Leviticus 3:11; Ezekiel 44:7. Meal-offerings to accompany all burnt-offerings, Numbers 28. Atonement made at the altar, Leviticus 17:10-14; Hebrews 9:11, 12. On the difference between sins of ignorance and presumptuous sins, see Numbers 15:27-31; cf. Psalm 51:16. On vicarious sacrifice, see Isaiah, ch. 53.

The sacrifice that especially symbolized the atonement was the sin-offering. Each part of the ceremony in this was significant. But it should be particularly noted that the covering took place when the blood was presented in the presence of God at the altar. The "life" of the unblemished offering at that point covered the life of the offerer. That the guilt of the sinner was not transferred to the victim when he pressed his hands upon its head is evident from the fact that the life of the animal was fit to be presented to God, and the fat, regarded as the choice part of the offering, was placed on the altar—God's table—for food. Besides, if the offerer's guilt were transferred to the victim by the pressing on of the hands, the offerer then would be symbolically guiltless, and there would be no need of the death of the animal.

Carrying this typified truth over to what Christ did, it is clear that he makes atonement when he presents his life before God in the true tabernacle. He did not do this when he died, though he made provision for it by dying. No sinner is covered by Christ until he wants him to cover him.

See Hebrews, ch. 9; especially ver. 24.

XL. Types in the Old Testament

According to some interpreters everything that furnishes any correspondence between facts, persons, and things in the Old Testament and the person and work of Christ or his church in the New is said to be a type. According to others there are no types at all.

In Fairbairn's *Typology* there is given a most satisfactory consideration of the whole subject. The definition of a type as given by him is, in substance, a symbol, symbolizing a future fact or truth, divinely appointed. These three elements may be looked for in a type. The surest way to recognize a type is to accept what the Bible designates as one. It may be that no Scriptural passage states what we find to be a type. But if what is not so interpreted is yet similar to what is, we may regard that also as a type. Each case should, however, be considered by itself, as no general statement can be made that will cover all cases.

Since the death of Christ is the central fact of all human history, and since this was determined before the world was, it is reasonable to suppose that information about this would be given to men before the event. Something of that which most vitally concerned men would be told to men. Thus there is nothing improbable in the fact that types were given as the most efficient way of foretelling what was to be. Simple predictions could be modified in transmission. Types would remain unchanged and would embody the truth taught without much modification. It seems clear that certain persons—Priest, Prophet, and King—were intended to be types of Christ. The sacrifices typified his work.

XLI. Tabernacle, Construction and Significance

By the covenant made at Sinai the Israelites were taken to be God's special people, and said to be priests

to him. This term seems to have had the meaning of one who had the right of access to God. This would involve the need of a place where God could be approached in worship, and the Tabernacle was made. The tent of God was to be among the tents of the people. The same idea occurs in Revelation. "The tabernacle of God is with men." As such a divine dwelling-place it was to be made of the best material and the costliest. Also, as it was to be a pattern of the true tabernacle in the heavens, nothing in its structure was to be left to the invention of men. The plan of it was from God, and the details of construction were given with the plan of the whole. We need not suppose that every part of it all had some special typical significance of what was to be true of Christ or of his church. Where we have any part interpreted in the Bible as typical, of course, we accept it as such. But there is need of caution in going beyond the Scriptures. There is no good reason for understanding each color or measurement to have a typical meaning.

While the word "tabernacle" is used of the entire structure including all its parts, the word is also restricted to the inner set of curtains—the ten in two groups joined to be one. All besides these curtains was needed to make these useful, the tent of goat's hair over the tabernacle for a protection, the sheepskins over that, and the sealskin above all. The boards marked off the limits of the tabernacle and concealed from profane view what was sacred. The wood was the acacia, light to carry, probably the only kind available.

The boards were kept in place by bars, five on each side and on the end. Besides these there was another, the sixteenth, perhaps the ridge-pole. (Exod. 36:33, Improved Ed.)

XLII. The Sin of Moses at the Rock

Some say Moses sinned in taking the honor of producing the water, instead of recognizing that it was from God. These would emphasize the word "we" in the question asked. But when the Hebrew intends to emphasize the pronoun it is expressed in addition to the verb form, which itself shows the pronoun. In this case the pronoun is not so given, hence was not emphatic. Others say the sin was disobedience, as he struck the rock, instead of speaking to it, and struck it twice. He is thought to have shown anger in both his words and his act. It could not easily be determined which word in his question "Must we fetch you water out of this rock?" is meant to be emphasized from the English translation only, but the Hebrew does show this clearly. When a word is to be emphasized in the Hebrew it is taken from its proper place and put first in the sentence. Here the words "from this rock" are placed first, and thus emphasized. By his question Moses showed that it was improbable, if not impossible, that water could be got from a rock. His doubt was so great that he thought speaking to the rock would not be enough. So he struck it, and twice. But all doubt about the real sin of Moses is removed by the verse following, "Because ye believed me not."

The central teaching of the whole book of Numbers is the necessity of belief in Jehovah. The people were destroyed for lack of this, and their leader especially was to illustrate this in his life. There was disobedience, but that was consequent upon the disbelief. (See also Hebrews 3:16-19.)

XLIII. Circumcision Omitted in the Wilderness

The Israelites did not keep up the practise of circumcision after their rejection because they had refused to enter Canaan. This omission could not have been for lack of time, as has been said. They had broken the covenant which God had made with them, and the sign of the covenant was therefore not appropriate. They had been cast off as God's special people to some extent at least, and the sign of the covenant was to be resumed only after they had been brought into the land promised, and the covenant thereby renewed. (Josh. 5:9.) While they were dying in the desert the Egyptians could reproach them with the taunt that their God was not able to take them to their land hoped for. But this reproach was rolled off at Gilgal. Hence the name of the place.

XLIV. Balaam

There are some puzzling things about Balaam. Though he practised soothsaying or magic, he seems to have recognized Jehovah as the true God. He could easily have learned of God as known to the Israelites, and of what he had done for them both in Egypt and

on the journey toward Canaan. Balaam was willing to submit to the will of Jehovah in his desire to meet the request and the wages of Balak. He said he could speak only what he was allowed to speak. That which dominated him was the desire for wages. He wanted to be paid for cursing Israel, and would have done this if allowed.

When he saw that the people could not be cursed because they had done nothing worthy of it, he went to the Midianites and advised them to induce the Israelites to sin by joining them in their idolatrous practises. This advice was taken, and Israel sinned. In the battle that resulted from this course the Midianites were defeated, and Balaam slain.

Numbers 31:16; 2 Peter 2:15; Jude 11.

XLV. The Blessings of Jacob and Moses

There are significant differences between the blessings that Jacob pronounced upon his sons and those which Moses pronounced upon the tribes years later. The most noticeable of these differences is in the case of Levi. Jacob remembered the cruelty of Levi in the treatment of the men of Schechem, and his prediction of the future of the tribe was determined by the act of the individual. Levi was to be scattered in Israel, without settled possession. This was practically meant to be a curse instead of a blessing. In the blessing of Moses Levi is highly praised and promised special advantages. In one particular the two predictions are in agreement—that the tribe would be

without a settled possession. But the meanings of the two predictions are quite diverse.

The prediction as it occurs in the blessing of Jacob could not have originated after Levi had shown his special zeal for the cause of Jehovah at Sinai, as some have said, putting the blessing at a far later date. This fact furnishes incidental evidence of the trustworthiness of the record.

See Genesis 40:5-7; Deuteronomy 33:8-11.

XLVI. Objections Urged to the Book of Joshua

It is said that this book should not have been admitted into the Canon of the Old Testament, as it presents ideas of God that not only conflict with our ideas of right and morality, but conflict also with the teachings in other parts of the Bible. The command to destroy the Canaanites shows a spirit of cruelty inconsistent with the spirit of a just God. This book is thus thought to show the marked difference between the Old Testament and the New. But if one realizes the awfulness of sin as presented in the Bible one could not urge this view. No injustice to the Canaanites is shown by their destruction, and escape from like punishment by any one can be only because of the mercy of God.

This instance has been cited as illustrating the theory of accommodation, that God took advantage of the wrong ideas of the Israelites to work out his purpose to remove the inhabitants of the land of Canaan. It is said that in those early days a foreigner was thought to be an enemy, and an enemy was to be killed. Israel

thought Canaanites were enemies and to be killed, and God allowed them to do this. That is, it was not God's command in reality, but Israel's wish. The account given is, however, wholly at variance with this view. God did give the command, and Israel was slow to carry it out, and suffered in consequence.

It must be remembered that the right of life belongs to God, and he may take it when he will. Nor does the means of taking it change the character of the act. That he employed the Israelites to do his will does not introduce any difference into the problem. Israel was only the agent of God. The act was not the act of Israel.

See Deuteronomy 7:2, 3; Joshua 9:24; 10:40. Mozeley, *Ruling Ideas in Early Ages.*

XLVII. Morality of the Old Testament and the New

While it is clear that there is progress in the unfolding of the doctrines of the Bible, especially as they are found in the New Testament in relation to what is given in the Old, it is further said that the New Testament at times condemns what is given in the Old, or at least corrects, if it does not distinctly condemn, the teaching of the earlier Scriptures, especially in respect to morality. If there is really a contradiction between the two Testaments in the matter, it would not be possible to esteem the Old Testament as the inspired word of God. As has been said in another note in this series, some affirm that the ideas of God presented in parts of the Old Testament are in conflict with the ideas

taught in the New. But especially the morality of the earlier Scriptures at least is said to be inferior to that which the New teaches.

Two instances are cited especially to prove this claim: The statement of Jesus when he was questioned about divorce, and his rebuking the disciples for asking that the Samaritans might be burnt by fire, as was done in the case of Elijah. In the matter of divorce Jesus said Moses permitted this, but from the first it was not intended, the man and his wife were to be one, and not separated. The ideal teaching, then, of the former Scriptures was as high as that of the New could be. In the case of the disciples' asking that fire might be brought from heaven, the words "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of" do not occur in the original text. Jesus did rebuke the disciples. It cannot be that the destruction of the men sent to take Elijah was condemned by Jesus, for the fire was sent from heaven. God punished, not Elijah. This was to teach, as so many other instances taught, that God would punish those who opposed him. There was no need of repeating the teaching when the Samaritans refused to receive Jesus. It had been taught emphatically.

It must be kept in mind that there is a difference to be recognized between the morality that the Old Testament teaches and the morality of some of the men of Old Testament times. The morality of the New Testament should not be inferred from the conduct of some of those mentioned in it.

XLVIII. Two Aspects of the Conquest of Canaan

The account of the conquest shows how Israel took the land that had been promised to Abraham and his sons, and it also shows that the Amorites were punished for their iniquity. When God told Abraham that this land should belong to his descendants, he said it would be after the iniquity of the Amorites was full. (Gen. 15:16.) Both of these aspects of the conquest must be kept in mind. God could give the land to whom he would, and the punishment of the inhabitants was wholly justifiable,. That other peoples outside of Canaan were exempt from such destruction at the time, does not show that God was partial in his dealings with men, or that the fate of the Canaanites was undeserved. The destruction was chiefly for a didactic purpose—sin will be punished. (1 Cor. 10:11.)

XLIX. Joshua at Gibeon

The statement that Joshua commanded the sun to stand still is quoted from a collection of poems that seem to have been written to commemorate victories got over enemies. It is in poetry, and should be interpreted as such. Hebrew poetry, as other poetry, is highly figurative. Whether what is said here is figurative or not must be determined from the whole account. In the part that is clearly prose it is said that the enemy had been defeated, and that hailstones had been sent from heaven to accomplish the defeat. It would seem hardly likely that the day would be prolonged in

order that Joshua might have time to overcome the Canaanites if they had been already killed by hailstones. The possibility of a miracle need not at all be doubted. But we cannot suppose God would do more than necessary to work out his purpose. If the world did indeed stop revolving for a time, we must not overlook what else must have taken place.

L. Return of the Eastern Tribes After the Conquest

In spite of some ambiguity in the English, it is certain that the altar erected by the returning tribes was on the east side of the Jordan. It was a copy of the altar where the rest of the tribes worshiped, and was intended to show that the tribes of the east were at one with those of the west. This could be shown only if the altar was in their own territory. The purpose of the western tribes to punish the others for what they supposed was a departure from the worship prescribed indicates that the Israelites were still faithful to Jehovah, and intended to keep his commandments. Of course it shows that the laws of worship had already been given, contrary to the contention of the critics, who assert that they were given, if at all, much later.

It was but a relatively short time after the conquest that the Israelites ceased to be influenced by the fact of a common ancestry, and each tribe cared only for its own interests. This incident here recorded shows that all the tribes of Israel cared about what one tribe did.

LI. Forces That Should Have United the Tribes Into a Nation

These forces were: A common ancestry, a common religion, and common enemies. The first and second of these helped to prevent the loss of Israelite identity by union with outside peoples, but the third was most effective in bringing about the union of the tribes into a nation. When two or more of the tribes were endangered by invasions, they were ready to join forces against a common enemy. But such union was temporary. When the danger was past, the tribes settled back to their isolation again. And in all the early cases of oppression not all the tribes united in defense. Through the whole period Judah was indifferent to the concerns of the northern tribes. It was only when the whole land was exposed to the dominance of the Philistines that Judah united with the rest in a common defense, and desired a common king.

LII. Purpose of the Book of Judges

In this book we have the history that shows Israel's need of a central, divinely appointed government. The period of the judges is the background of the monarchy. In the time of the judges the people were left to themselves. There seems to have been no recognized authority that determined their conduct. As it is said, "Every man did what was right in his own eyes" (Judg. 21:23). There was no king in Israel. Because of this liberty we have the repeated cycle: sin, punish-

ment, repentance, deliverance. Judges were raised up to deliver, but when the work of the judge was done, the people fell back to sinning again, and another punishment was sent.

Clearly the moral character of some of the judges was not of a high type. But their lives are recorded, not for examples, but because they fell within the purposes of God. The judges were not successful and approved because of their morality, but because they were willing to act for God. Their conduct cannot be taken as the standard of Old Testament teaching on morality. These same judges, those that seem the worst, are named among the faithful in Hebrews, ch. 11.

It has been said that this book is fittingly found in the canon of the Old Testament, because it comes so near to presenting ordinary human nature. But the daily newspapers do that, and we could hardly think of them as a part of the Holy Scriptures.

LIII. Relative Time of Peace and War in the Period of the Judges

It might seem from a reading of this book that there was war most of the time. But if we reckon up the years of war and those of peace, we find more peace than war. The book is not intended to state all that happened, but to show why Israel needed a king. The book of Ruth, that so beautifully pictures a scene of peace during this period, shows that peace did prevail part of the time.

LIV. The Demand for a King

Israel had been progressing along political lines from families to clans and tribes, but the tribes had not yet been united into a nation. The repeated attacks of the enemies about them, especially those from the Philistines, while they were still separated as tribes, led them to ask for a king, in order, as they said, that they might be like the other nations, and that they might have a man to fight their battles for them. No form of government had been prescribed, and none had been forbidden. It had already been indicated that the time would come when they would want a king, and his origin and character had been described. (Deut. 17: 14.) To have a king would not be in conflict with the fact that God was their King, their supreme Ruler. The term " theocracy " should not be limited to the time before the establishing of the monarchy. A king could rule under Jehovah, who would rule both the king and the people. The fact that they asked for a king was not wrong because a kingdom would be in conflict with God's purpose, for the kingdom idea is a dominant one in both the Old Testament and the New. Any king of God's people was a type of the greater King who was to come.

LV. The King Idea

In the kings of Israel, especially the first two, we have illustrated the idea that God would have a people over whom there should be a king ruling according to

his will and carrying out his purposes. The central thought of a king about which all else was grouped, was a ruler in complete obedience to God. Saul or David, or any other of the kings, is to be judged, not as an Oriental king only, but as a Messianic king, typifying the true King who was to come. Saul shows in a negative way what the king was to be by his failing to conform to what was required of a king. He may have been successful judged by ordinary tests, but he was a failure because he did not meet the requirements of a type of Christ. David was a "man after God's own heart," not because all he did was right, but because he ruled, for the most part, in accordance with God's will, accomplishing his purposes. The reign of Saul, then, was not a blunder made in selecting him. His very failure, with the reasons for it made plain, teaches what was demanded of a king over God's people.

See Acts 13:32.

LVI. The Kingdom Formed

The great work of Saul, considered politically, was the uniting of the tribes into a nation. This was accomplished, not so much by the ability of Saul to rule, as by the desire of the tribes to be united against an enemy. The enemy then was Philistia, who much of the time was dominant over the Israelites. The tribe of Judah seems to have kept apart from the other tribes during most of the period of the judges, and even during the reign of Saul. The geographical

situation of this tribe encouraged isolation. Judah was secure in the highland of her territory. By the time of the death of Saul the people had become accustomed to the idea of having a king and that they had become a kingdom. The central authority of the monarchical government was recognized.

LVII. Mutual Relation of Prophet, Priest, and King

The functions of these three were distinct from each other. The king was to secure the interests of his people by defending them from enemies and by acting as supreme judge in controversies between his own subjects. In these respects the king had taken over the functions of the judges. The priest was to officiate at the altar, and was also to instruct the people in the laws of God. He was supreme in religious matters. The prophet was to be the medium between God and the people, including the king—delivering any message given to him from God.

The king had no right to assume the prerogatives of either priest or prophet. The priest likewise was restricted to his own proper functions, and could not encroach upon the functions of either king or prophet. But a prophet could direct the course of either priest or king, because of any special message from God, and could rebuke either if in the wrong. It cannot be said that either of these stood higher than the others, but each was to respect the office of the others. Saul failed in this regard when he disobeyed the command of the prophet, and when he slew the priests.

In the New Testament Jesus Christ is spoken of as Priest in the Epistle to the Hebrews only. He is spoken of as Prophet a few times in the Gospels only. He is mentioned as King over his kingdom, and Ruler of the world in many places.

LVIII. False Prophets

During most of the time that there were prophets in Israel who were commissioned by God to speak to the people, there were some who claimed the title, but whose messages were their own inventions, not God's word. They had entered upon the work of the prophets neither ordained by men nor called of God. It seems that the prophets were in part supported by the people, and it may well be that the false prophets engaged in their work for the support they expected. All such are severely condemned. (Ezek. 13.)

LIX. The Kingdom Under David

David began his reign with the kingdom already formed. There was still, however, lack of complete unity between Judah and the northern tribes, a lack which existed till the end of Solomon's reign, when a final separation took place. David's work was to make the nation dominant among the nations around it. His wars were not for conquest, but in the defense of Israel. By the end of his reign Israel had become established securely among the smaller powers of the known world, and was not yet in danger from the greater powers—Egypt and Assyria. As Saul left to his suc-

cessor a nation formed from its several tribes, so David left to his successor a kingdom secured from attacks by enemies. Israel was not exposed in the reign of Solomon to external dangers, but there were internal conditions that might result in damage to the kingdom.

In his character as king David is to be highly commended. He was truly "a man after God's own heart" in the sense that he regarded his position as one appointed by God, in which he was to accomplish God's will. His great sin is not to be a criterion of his character. He murdered, but he was not a "murderer."

His religious character is worthy of note. It is denied that some of the Psalms ascribed to him could have been written by him, as they are not in accord with the religious character of the David of the historical books. It is maintained that as he was a man of war, he could have written war-songs only, as the Eighteenth Psalm. But in the history of his life he is shown to be faithful to the idea that he was under the direction of Jehovah, and he depended upon him for his safety and his success. He refused to harm the anointed of Jehovah.

1 Samuel 24:6; 26:9; 2 Samuel 12.

LX. The Kingdom Under Solomon

Solomon came to the throne with his kingdom established and made secure from successful attack from the surrounding nations. Besides the great work of his life—building the temple—he was to make the kingdom

glorious as compared with all the other kingdoms. The glory should have been seen in his own person as king, as well as in the riches and in the material splendor everywhere evident. David typified the dominant dominion of the Messianic king, Solomon was to foreshadow the majestic splendor of Him who was to be King of kings. Solomon should have held to the idea that he was to rule only as a ruler under God—to carry out God's purposes. He lost sight of this fact, and came to concentrate his efforts on making himself glorious. In his selfishness he forgot the good of his people. His very splendor by this selfish endeavor makes his failure all the more glaring. The splendor was not in itself incongruous with the idea of the Messianic kingdom, but Solomon's selfishness was.

Psalm 72:8-12; Isaiah, ch. 60. On intermarriage with foreigners, see Exodus 34:16; Deuteronomy 7. For the plan of the temple, see 1 Chronicles 28:11, 12, 19. On the material furnished by David, see 1 Chronicles, chs. 22 and 29; H. D. B., art. "Temple"; Bliss and Dickie, *Excavations at Jerusalem.*

LXI. Condition of the Two Kingdoms at the First

The northern kingdom, Israel, had the more fertile land, it being better watered, and had greater accessibility to the surrounding nations. This, however, made invasion the easier, and Israel suffered from such invasions more than did Judah. But more than hostile armies entered the land of Israel. The idolatry of the heathen found easy access, and the northern kingdom departed more early and more frequently from a recognition of Jehovah's right to their service.

Israel was without the temple, priesthood, and sacrifices appointed by God. Their first king, Jeroboam, started the kingdom in a course of idolatrous practises, and was followed by each succeeding king. Because of their apostasy Israel was the first to go into captivity. Many prophets lived among them, but all their warnings went unheeded.

Judah had the temple and its worship. They could the more easily believe themselves to be the people of God, though the name continued to be applied to the northern kingdom also. The situation and character of the land of Judah made invasion difficult. When the two great powers, Egypt and Assyria, or Babylon, engaged in their mutual conflicts, their armies marched beside Judah, not through it. So the southern kingdom lay safe from attack for centuries. According to the history Judah had fewer prophets to preach to them, but they remained truer to Jehovah longer than did Israel. Nor did they so easily and quickly adopt the idolatries of the surrounding peoples. In the north the line of kings was often changed from one family to another—for the most part by the murder of the ruling king. In Judah all the kings were of the family of David. Some of them were wicked, but God promised David that his descendants should continue to sit on his throne.

LXII. The Work of Elijah

Israel had adopted many of the idolatrous ideas and practises of the surrounding peoples, especially the wor-

ship of Baal, god of the Phœnicians. The name Baal was often used as a common noun, and was applied to Jehovah, meaning owner or master, but it was the distinctive name of this foreign god, and when the Israelites were worshiping Baal, particularly at the time of Ahab, they knew they were not worshiping Jehovah. Jezebel had attempted to establish the worship of the god of her own people in the land of her adoption, Israel, and her husband Ahab was an easy instrument in her hands to accomplish this purpose. The work of Elijah was to convince the people that Jehovah, not Baal, was the true God. The drought that came at the instance of this prophet, its ending at his intercession, the restoration of the widow's son to life, all showed that Jehovah alone was God, and had the power of life and death. The proof of this reached its climax on Carmel. And the people admitted that Jehovah was God. The idol prophets were slain, not by a new command, but by what was given long before by Moses. (Deut. 13.)

LXIII. Elijah at Horeb

Elijah fled from the wrath of Jezebel, but it seems clear that he was directed to go on to Horeb, as he was given food by the angel for the journey. In answer to God's question, he showed that he had no hope of Israel's return to Jehovah. They had killed all the rest of the prophets, and his life was in danger. He interceded against the people. (Rom. 11:2.) The wind, earthquake, and fire did not mean that God re-

fused to employ force against his people, but gentle means, indicated by the gentle sound, for Elijah was commanded to anoint those who would use force to destroy the wicked among God's people.

These phenomena did mean that after the punishment God would show mercy to a remnant that would be left. The theophany must have been in accord with the commission.

The important doctrine taught here in this experience of Elijah was that the real people of God were not coterminous with nominal Israel. The real Israel of God would be those who should be faithful to him. And in spite of the destruction of the sinners of Israel, there would remain a remnant. In the revelation given to Moses on Horeb, the chosen people was the whole nation redeemed from Egypt. Now, on Horeb Elijah is shown that, irrespective of these national lines, God would have a people characterized by faith. This test would exclude some of the descendants of Jacob, and it could include some not known by the name "Israel." This idea of a true Israel of faith is given with increasing clearness in the prophets, especially in Isaiah. (See Isa. 19:24, 25.) And it is in full accord with the teaching of Paul. (See especially Rom., ch. 9.)

LXIV. Work of Elisha

Elijah thought his work was finished and had failed, But another was to carry on the work. Elijah had to warn, to threaten and punish. Elisha was to teach that God would show mercy after punishment. The

miracles of Elisha taught this. Some of these may seem trivial, but they are in harmony with this central truth. Each contains the thought of the first—the healing of the water.

The relative positions of these two prophets could not have been reversed. The people were to be convinced of sin before they were to be assured of God's mercy. There is this same mutual relation between the Old Testament and the New. The Old emphasizes sin and its punishment; the New emphasizes the fact that God would have mercy upon the penitent. The justice of God and his mercy are found in both Testaments, but not equally emphasized. The preacher should recognize the proper relation of these facts, or he will fail in his preaching. The sinner must be shown that he is a sinner before a Saviour is offered to him.

LXV. The Captivity of Israel

Among the entire line of kings of Israel there was no one that attempted to turn the people back to Jehovah. All followed Jeroboam in his wickedness. Many prophets rebuked and warned the people, but there was no reform. Hence the nation was overthrown and the people carried into exile, as had been threatened. Samaria fell under the attack of the Assyrian army, when Sargon was king. Shalmaneser IV had begun the siege of the city, but died before it was taken.

The Assyrians had already adopted the policy of transporting a large proportion of any people conquered either to Mesopotamia, or to countries near it,

in order to discourage further rebellion against this dominant power, or to make Assyrians of the captives. This without doubt was what happened to the Israelites. Their religion had not kept them faithful to Jehovah when in their own land, and it would not now do so when they came to dwell among idolatrous peoples, as they themselves were idolaters. Israel was too far sunken in their wickedness and apostasy from Jehovah to be restored by the punishment of captivity. Thus the ten tribes were "lost" in the sense that they were absorbed in the heathen nations. All attempts to discover them among the various peoples of the earth in various lands have thus far proved futile. Any identification now would be hard to substantiate.

LXVI. Judah's Contact with Assyria

Judah's situation made her safe against invasion by the two powers in their mutual conflicts. The land lay to one side of the line of march of the armies of Egypt going against Assyria, and of Assyria going against Egypt. It was not easy to ascend into the hill-country to attack this relatively insignificant people. After the division of the Israelites into the two kingdoms there was war between these almost all the time. When in danger from Israel, Judah sent for help to Aramea—Syria. Later when both these powers threatened Judah she sought help from Assyria, in the days of Ahaz, and thus for the first time came into contact with this power. From that time Judah was merely a tributary to Assyria, except for a time in the reign

of Hezekiah who attempted to secure his independence of this dominating land. This rebellion of Judah's king led to the attack of Sennacherib, who took many captives and much booty, but did not take Jerusalem. The sudden death of a large part of his warring host caused him to return hastily from the campaign. But the successors of Hezekiah were subject to Assyria and Babylon until the captivity, except for a brief time while Egypt was dominant over Babylon. Ahaz had been offered help from God by Isaiah, but he refused it, and his refusal gave occasion for the remarkable Immanuel prophecies of Isaiah, ch. 7, 9, and 11.

LXVII. Reforms of Hezekiah and Josiah

These reforms came late in the history of Judah—too late to avert the punishment long before predicted and so long deserved. Moses had said that if the people persisted in sinning against Jehovah who had redeemed them, they would be scattered among the nations. The captors were not specifically designated, as there was no one at that time in view. If the threat had been originated in a late time when some one enemy was in sight, as Assyria or Babylon, that enemy would no doubt have been named. Many of the kings of Judah were wicked, but God had promised David that for David's sake he would show mercy to one that should sin against him. The presence of the temple and the worship there had helped to keep Judah from turning from Jehovah so soon as Israel

had. But even the southern kingdom became increasingly idolatrous. Neither the warnings of the prophets nor the example of the punishment of Israel turned them from their evil course. And the advance in sin had reached such a point that the reforms of these two good kings could not avert the climax of punishment—captivity.

The critics hold that the book of Deuteronomy was the book found in the cleansing of the temple under Josiah, that it had just been written, and that the contents of the book led to the reform by this king. But Isaiah had undertaken similar reforms about a hundred years before. All of the critical view about the relative origin of the Old Testament history hinges upon the supposition that Deuteronomy was not only found at this time, but was written near the time of its discovery—written that the king might be induced to help the "Mosaic" party, who wished the worship to be restricted to the one place, the temple. If it was really such a deception, and the book was of that late date only, a pious fraud as it has been called, Josiah was completely deceived, and he prayed for the forgiveness of his people for breaking laws—that had never been given to them!

LXVIII. Restoration of the Jews from Exile

The motive of Cyrus in permitting the Jews to go back to their own land seems to have been that he might have a people made friendly to himself by his favor on the border between himself and the Egyptian power

on the south. Thus he granted permission to the Jews to rebuild their temple and resume their worship of their God. The building of the temple was hindered by the neighbors of the Jews on the north. But it was completed by the zeal of the Jews aroused by the labors of the prophets Haggai and Zechariah.

Ezra went to Jerusalem about seventy-five years after the temple was completed, and there appears to have been a religious revival due to his labors, a revival that led to an attempt to rebuild the walls of the city. When this effort was reported to the king Artaxerxes, he ordered it stopped, and the walls so far built burnt. This was the matter that stirred the sympathies of Nehemiah and caused his tears for the city of his fathers' sepulchers, and the request that he might go and build the walls. His professed filial piety was the ground of his petition. His work was chiefly political, rather than religious. So that both the religious and the political condition of the Jews was reestablished to some degree.

The account given in Ezra 4:7-23 belongs to a time much later than the events described in the verses preceding and following this passage.

LXIX. Effect of the Captivity Upon Judah

While it seems clear that the captivity of the northern kingdom did not lead to repentance on the part of the Israelites, as they were already so far sunken in idolatry, the captivity of Judah led to their good, and when they returned to their land they did not again fall

into idolatry. They were inclined, however, to intermarry with the heathen peoples about them, and thus to lose their identity as God's chosen people. Nehemiah helped to prevent this national calamity, and we are indebted largely to his work and the preaching of the prophet Malachi for the Scriptures we have received from this chastened people. Fortunately for us, the Jews became increasingly proud of their isolation and of what they esteemed as their superiority over all others.

As they believed that their punishment had been due to their failure to keep the law, they came to hold this as most important, and guarded it with excessive care to keep from breaking it. Even if their punctilious observance was in part mere form, and not hearty, the result was for good. Because of their regard for God's word, we are sure that the Hebrew Scriptures which we now have are almost completely in the form in which they were originally written.

With the loss of the temple while in exile came the building of synagogues where their Scriptures could be read, and prayers offered. These were found later as widely as the Jews were scattered, and furnished a prototype for Christian churches.

LXX. Didactic Purpose of Punishment

In the recorded instances of punishment sent upon the Israelites it is clear that the punishment was justly deserved. At times it might seem that partiality was shown, for cities evidently as wicked as those punished

were allowed to go unpunished. And when the nation as a whole suffered for some special sin, it could be said that some generations that lived before or after such a visitation were as wicked as those that were made to suffer. Further, it is quite evident that we cannot interpret a calamity in our own day as a judgment from God. It has therefore been said that the calamities that in the Old Testament are described as judgments were not such, but were thought to be by the Israelites who regarded all phenomena as evidence of God's immediate working. Especially great calamities were so interpreted. The question then is a pertinent one, Were these real judgments? And if so, Why are they not sent now? There is one passage in the New Testament that gives a final answer to the question. Paul says, after citing some of the calamities that befell Israel, "Now these things happened unto them for examples, and are written for our admonition" (1 Cor. 10:11). While the punishment sent was deserved because of sin, it had a further didactic purpose. As we have the records of this teaching we do not need that it be repeated in our own times.

God was thus teaching all men for all time that sin is hateful in his sight, and will be punished if persisted in. No injustice was done to those who suffered because others went unpunished. Unless the punishment was deserved there could have been no teaching. If wicked cities or wicked generations escaped punishment, it was only because of the mercy of God.

It will be noticed that many of the most prominent cases of such punishments came at the beginning of some special era in the history of the people. The lesson was taught at the outset, and did not need to be repeated subsequently.

LXXI. Tithing by the Israelites

Because Abraham paid tithes to Melchizedek, it is concluded that tithing was common before his day, before it was commanded at Sinai. Abraham gave of what he had taken in battle, not from the income from his flocks and herds. It can hardly be said that his act was an example for the conduct of Israel as they did not pay a tenth after they had conquered the Midianites, but one-fiftieth from one-half of the booty and one-five-hundredth from the other. (Num. 31 : 25-47.)

The Israelites were to give one-tenth of their income to the Levites, and these in turn to give one-tenth of what they thus received to the priests, and these tithes were the salaries of these who served at the altar. The Levites had no portion of land in Canaan, and so were to be supported by the other tribes. They received more than this tenth, but this was a specified salary, varying as the income of the tribes varied. There were other demands made of a faithful Israelite besides the salary he was to pay to those who ministered at the altar.

If it be said that the Christian is under obligation to pay tithes because of this law, he should carry out the law exactly and give one-tenth of his income to the

pastor as his salary. What he may give to the missionaries or for coal for the church should not be taken out of this special contribution.

Stewardship is not limited to the proper management of this tenth part of one's income. All that we have belongs to our Lord, and as stewards we are to render an account to him of our way of managing it all—time, brains, muscles, and nerves, as well as what money we may happen to have.

LXXII. The Significance of the Sabbath

It cannot be urged that the institution of the Sabbath was to meet the physical needs of man. If the Israelites in the wilderness, their only work being to watch their flocks, needed to rest one day in each seven, one would need now about six days in seven. Man needs to rest nights more certainly than to rest each seventh day, but no law was given commanding this. Nor is it satisfactory to say that the rest was for a special religious purpose, adding to the regular worship of the other days. The only added act of worship prescribed was that two lambs be offered instead of one.

The passage in the New Testament so often quoted to prove the universal obligation to observe the Sabbath—"the sabbath was made for man"—states only that man is of more importance than the Sabbath, and in this same passage Jesus taught that the Sabbath was a symbol only, and could be ignored in case of a real physical need. If a man is hungry, let him break the Sabbath law without rebuke. Besides, if the day was

for physical rest only, why was it called a "holy sabbath to Jehovah"? What is holy about failing to work?

The real purpose of the Sabbath is given in the law for its observance. (Exod. 20: 11.) As God had rested on the seventh day of his creative work, man was to rest on the seventh day of his week to commemorate the rest of God, a rest which man was to share. And though he forfeited the right to share this rest by sin, he would regain it by what Christ should do. So the Sabbath pointed back to the rest forfeited, and forward to the rest to be regained. The Sabbath was a type as Paul teaches in the only passage in which he mentions it in his epistles to the churches. (Col. 2: 16.) If the Christian should observe the day as commemorating what his Lord has done for him, he would not be troubled by the many "don'ts" that are so burdensome.

II

KINGDOM OF GOD

1. In the Old Testament

The term kingdom includes both the idea of the kingship of God—his right to rule—and the realm over which he rules.

As the omnipotent Ruler, God is King over all things, inanimate or animate, including men. While all other objects of creation may remain in harmony with the laws of their constitution, remain in the spheres and orbits assigned to them, man rebelled against God's rule, broke away from his control, and is not ruled by him, except by compulsion. Yet God would have a kingdom among men whose subjects would be in harmony with his will of their own accord. But that such a kingdom might be established sin must be subdued. Men would be brought into accord with God when their sins were forgiven and their hearts changed, so that they would will to do his will. Not all men would belong to this kingdom. Those forming it would be chosen from all the rest. Thus Abraham was elected, called out, in order that he and his descendants might form this kingdom of God. But the kingdom was not to be restricted to the descendants of Abraham. There would be in it those from other peoples and races characterized by the faith that distinguished Abraham.

A visible, distinct people to be so ruled, and to be obedient to God, was taken at Sinai, and the covenant made with them there included two conditions: God would give them his special care, and they would obey his word. While all nations were declared to belong to God, Israel was chosen to be a special possession, a "peculiar people." Israel was to hold this distinct position—chosen above those of other names—until the wider purpose of God should be gained in later times. As obedience was made the requisite of the members of the kingdom, disobedience would debar even those nominally God's people from membership in it. Thus it was evident from the first that the members of the kingdom would be distinguished not by blood, but by belief. It was to be a spiritual kingdom, not one of flesh.

The kingdom idea was put in a concrete form by the establishing of the monarchy with Saul as first king. During the preceding period of the judges it had become clear that the chosen people of God, the people taken to be his at Sinai, would not live in accordance with God's will, nor accomplish his purpose in choosing them, if left to themselves without some dominating control. There was need of a government divinely appointed, a king to rule God's people under God as himself King. And while God gave to Israel a king at their request, the motive of their request was not to have God as their ruler. They wished to have a king who would fight their battles for them, and defend them from the attacks of nations about them. The true

idea of the king was not, however, lost sight of. Saul failed to meet the ideal, and was rejected. He did not realize that he was king to carry out God's will, not his own. The literal, physical kingdom was his chief concern, not a spiritual kingdom whose subjects would serve God's purpose. While the career of Saul might seem to have been a failure, it did help to show what a king over God's kingdom was really to be, one whose reign should further God's purposes—a theocratic king. Saul lost sight of this fundamental fact. A successor was chosen who would be a "man after God's own heart," i. e., one whose reign would be in accord with God's will. But even David did not reach the ideal, and by falling short of this, he gave occasion for the prophecy that a true Messianic King, a true representative of God, was yet to come. This coming King was typified by David and by his successors on his throne.

It was early indicated that the distinguishing characteristic of the members of this kingdom of God was to be spiritual, not physical, that entrance into it would be conditioned by moral nature, not by birth. And it came to be clear that this condition would exclude some of those who belonged to the nominal people of God, the literal Israel, and that it would include likewise some from the other nations of the earth. Such exclusion was illustrated in the punishments sent upon Israel for their sins, culminating in the exile from the land given them. And the inclusion, foretold in the call of Abraham, Genesis 12:3, was taught in the messages

of the prophets. The fact that a true Israel would be selected from the carnal Israel was especially shown to Elijah at Horeb. The prophet was told that punishment would be sent upon the wicked nation, as he desired, but a remnant would be left of those who remained faithful to Jehovah. Their Israelite blood would not save the rest. Joel teaches this truth in his prediction that the remnant would consist of those who called upon Jehovah, and whom Jehovah would call. (Joel 2:32.) The remnant would not consist of Israelites only.

The keyword of Isaiah is "remnant," implying that most would be cut off, and few left. There would be a true, spiritual Israel within the carnal Israel. But the corollary of this truth, that faith in Jehovah was requisite for membership in the kingdom of God, was also emphasized in Isaiah in his predictions that those from other peoples would join God's chosen people. This is remarkably shown in his statement about Egypt and Assyria, inveterate enemies of Israel, who would be called by the names that had been especially given to Israel. (Ch. 19:24, 25.)

A further truth taught about the kingdom of God in the Old Testament is that the members of it would be chosen by the grace of God, not because of their characters or conduct. Their sins would be forgiven, and they were to be holy as God is holy. The means and method of their acceptance and sanctification are set forth in the Levitical ritual—priesthood and sacrifice. The glaring failure of the priests that were chosen, and

the obvious imperfection of the sacrifices, their inadequacy to cleanse permanently from sin, showed these were but types of Priest and Sacrifice yet to come. The true Priest and effective Sacrifice had not yet been provided. While the two conceptions, King and Sufferer, seem so incompatible, it is clear that both were essential, and would be embodied in one Person. While the work of the Sufferer is taught, the idea of King is more emphasized in the Old Testament.

2. In the New Testament

The kingdom of God so often mentioned in the New Testament evidently means a spiritual kingdom. Jesus said the only possibility of entering it, or even of seeing it, was through a new birth. What was to be preached was the gospel of the kingdom. That did not mean that the gospel was to be preached first, and then the kingdom would follow. The subject of the discourses of Christ after his resurrection when he talked with his disciples, was the kingdom of God. As they knew he was about to go away from them, they could not have supposed that he was about to set up a literal kingdom, such as David ruled over, in the capital of the nation. A little while before Jesus had said that the kingdom was to be taken away from the Jews and given to a nation that would bring forth its fruit. So when Jesus told the disciples to remain and preach in Jerusalem, they asked if the kingdom was then to be restored to Israel, and that they would have again what had been taken from them.

Christ would be seen sitting at the right hand of God in heaven. His kingdom would be a spiritual one, formed not only of Jews, but of any who should receive the message of the kingdom to be preached in all the world. And so we find the apostles preaching the kingdom in their journeys of labor for the ascended Christ. He was seated on the "throne of David," a spiritual King, over a spiritual kingdom, which the throne and rule of David typified.

The following are the passages in the New Testament that mention the kingdom, or the King:

Matt. 3:2. Repent for the kingdom is at hand.
4:17. Repent for the kingdom is at hand.
4:23; 9:35. Preached the kingdom.
5:20. Not to be entered without righteousness.
7:21. Only those doing the will of God could enter.
8:10, 12. Those outside of Israel to enter.
16:28. Those present to see the Son of Man coming in kingdom.
18:34. Belongs to those like children.
19:24. Rich could hardly enter.
21:43. Taken from Jews and given to others.
24:14. Gospel of the kingdom to be preached everywhere.
25:34. Those doing good to Christ's to inherit the kingdom.
Luke 4:48; 8:1; 9:60. Jesus and disciples preach the kingdom.
13:28. Abraham in kingdom, Jews outside.
17:20, 21. Not come with observation.
18:17. If not receive as a child, not enter.
John 3:3, 5. Must be born again to enter.
18:36. Christ's kingdom not of this world.
18:37. Jesus admitted to Pilate he was King.
Acts 1:2. During forty days Christ spoke of the kingdom.
8:12. Apostles preached the kingdom of God.
14:22. Enter the kingdom through tribulation.

Acts 19:8. Paul for three months persuaded about the kingdom.
28:23. Paul testified in bonds at Rome about the kingdom.
28:30, 31. During two years preached the kingdom.
Romans 14:17. Kingdom of God not food, but righteousness.
1. Cor. 6:9, 10. Wicked not inherit the kingdom.
15:24. Christ deliver up the kingdom to the Father.
15:50. Flesh and blood not inherit the kingdom.
Gal. 5:21. Wicked not inherit the kingdom.
Eph. 5:5. Wicked not inherit the kingdom.
Col. 1:13. Translated into the kingdom of his dear Son.
1 Thess. 2:12. Called into the kingdom.
2 Thess. 1:5. Counted worthy of the kingdom.
2 Peter 1:11. Be diligent to enter the kingdom.
James 2:5. Promised to them that love him.

III

HOMILETICAL SUGGESTIONS

Selections from Jeremiah

INTRODUCTORY NOTE. The work of this prophet extended from about 627 to 570 B. C. This was just at the time that Judah was near her fall. Even the reforms of Josiah were little more than spasms of death-throes. The wickedness of Jehoiakim and Zedekiah was all the more reprehensible because the kingdom was sunken so low, and the end was so near. The people generally seem to have been more completely given up to idolatry of all forms than at any time before. In spite of the work of the prophets, the worship of Jehovah was only perfunctory.

The enemy that threatened was Babylon. The conditions were not essentially different from those in the Assyrian period, only the name of the enemy had changed. Jeremiah's special work was to interpret the calamity coming upon them as the fulfilment of the threats made by the former prophets. This was primarily in order to warn the people, but also that the terrible events might be correctly understood, and what they taught be for permanent study. The prophet was there in the midst of the crash to explain, apply, and direct as no other prophet had been in former cases of punishment.

Jeremiah had to face, not only the angry defiance of professed loyalists, those advocating an alliance with Egypt, and those insisting upon complete independence of outside powers—all these bent upon their own selfish ends—but he had also to give special messages to the king, commanding him to surrender to Babylon if he would be saved. No prophet before him had such personal opposition to meet, and none showed greater courage. The common idea about this prophet's weeping weakness is utterly unfounded.

There is not so much of new religious views found in Jeremiah as there is of clearer conceptions of views already given. Former prophets had already seen a future in which a restored, purified, dominant people would be ideally faithful to Jehovah. They had not foreseen a radical change to something different in essence from what had been, but a lopping off, a purifying, the removal of dross from the people chosen to be holy as God was holy. Government and political relations then prevailing were so fully in the view of these prophets that any radical change to an entity that would be different from what had been was not clearly seen by them.

Jeremiah sees all government and forms of worship breaking to pieces before his eyes. But he does not therefore think all is lost. He is rather triumphantly sure of a glorious issue, which will be, not the old conditions restored after purification, but in reality a new entity, a new covenant made with a new people. The kernel will germinate though it fall to its death.

The essential part of God's people will not perish. But this essential substance is a new growth, rather than a new branch springing out of the old stump, such as Isaiah saw. But all this will be the fulfilment of God's purpose from the first. In the midst of the storm the flashes of lightning do not so blind the prophet that he can see only what is being demolished. The flashes give him views of the calm heavens above all the storm, and God enthroned guiding all to his purposed ends.

Some of the prophecies are closely connected with the personal experiences of the prophet when he was persecuted by the Jewish officials. At the outset of his work he saw the difficulties and dangers that threatened, and shrank from them; and during the progress of his preaching he longed for release from the cruel strain, but he remained stedfast to the end. It was well for him that he was assured of God's purpose in sending him into this work and of his promise to defend him from defeat.

Homilies from Jeremiah's Prophecies

The following are not to be understood as the only thoughts that may be got from these prophecies, but rather as hints of the way they may be used.

Ch. 1.	Encouragement from a personal call to work.
	God's purpose before birth of the preacher.
	The work to be done is God's.
	The means used is from God.
	Demolishing may be as necessary as building.
Ver. 17.	Man's valor determined in part by himself.
Ver. 18.	Safer to do the work than to avoid it.

Ch. 2.	God's people fall far short of the expected and possible.
	Judah's sin all the greater because they were warned.
Ch. 3.	God's great love for his faithless people.
	They sinned in the face of Choice, Care, Warning.
	Yet God would take them back. (Cf. Hosea 2: 14-20.)
Ch. 7.	False trust in empty worship.
	Religious objects are not essentially sacred.
	A church relation is not the end to be sought, but right relation to God.
	Church-membership does not ensure safety.
	To say that one is a minister is to say what he does, not what he is.
	To be known as a Christian is not the same as being one.
Ch. 9: 23, 24.	Knowing God the ground of greatest glory.
	His lovingkindness, judgment, righteousness.
	The character of God to be translated into human action.
Ver. 25.	The nominal people of God not exempt from obligation.
Ch. 11.	Seriousness of a covenant made with God.
	It involves obligation to God as well as favor from God.
	Unworthy excuses for neglect of service:
	"Don't like the minister."
	"Don't like the other members of the church."
	"Don't like the methods used."
Ch. 12: 14.	The Christian must first be true to God, then lead others to him.
Ch. 13: 11.	God's people are to be to him a "people," a "name," a "praise," a "glory."
	Jeremiah spoke plainly even to the king.
	The preacher is not to be abashed by some great one in his audience.
Ch. 13: 17; 14: 17.	Jeremiah wept, but for the sins of his people, not for himself.

He was not a minister whining because of his hard lot, but his heart was wrung with love and sympathy.

Ch. 14:15. A sin to prophesy in the name of God, and not give God's words.

Wicked to be professedly a preacher of God's word, and be only a talker of other things.

Ch. 15:10. Jeremiah sorry he was born to such a life, but the people would later turn to him.

People may scorn the minister, but they will come to him for a funeral.

Ch. 16:10, 11. Wickedness of turning from the true God.

Today men reject Christ and substitute nothing. "Lord, to whom shall we go?"

Ch. 17:9, 10. God alone truly knows man's heart.

Others may be deceived about what a man is, but God never.

Ch. 18. The potter, the clay, the vase.

The potter makes what he pleases with the clay.

God desires a beautiful vase. Men may mar it.

Ch. 19:1, 10. The broken bottle.

Well to use illustrations that illustrate.

Ch. 20:6; 28:16; 29:31; 32:4. Personal prophecies.

The individual not lost sight of by God.

Ch. 20:7, 8, 9. Jeremiah despondent, wants to give up his work.

But God's word was burning in his heart.

The prophet did not know how permanent his work would be, God did.

Encouragement from God must dominate discouragement from difficulties.

Ch. 26. Jeremiah's defense based upon the truth of his message. If not believed that would not avert the calamity. They might kill the prophet, but not God's word.

Ch. 31:35, 36. The laws of the heavenly bodies would change sooner than God's love for his people.

31:31-37. The covenant written in the heart.

Obedience spontaneous, not compulsory.

Ch. 31: 29, 30. Teeth on edge. Personal responsibility.
Ch. 33. Brightest outlook from deepest gloom.
Darkness and difficulty give occasion for promise.
Certainty of the future based on God's promise.
Not a mere guess, nor a calculation.
God's purposes run through all the future.
Ch. 34. Jeremiah's patriotism dominated by religion.
Preacher may preach patriotism, if based on morals.
Ch. 35. Rechabites faithful to father's command.
Some pay more attention to man's opinion than to God's will.
Ch. 36. Burning the prophet's words made them multiply.
The dissecting knives of critics cannot destroy the Bible.
Ch. 37: 11. Jeremiah's life spared. God does not always spare a man. He can find others to take one's place.
Ch. 38. The king commanded to surrender.
Advice that seemed wrong was best.
Better to go in God's way blindly, than in man's, though reasonable.
38: 4. The minister may condemn his own country if in the wrong.
Because a country is mine does not prove it right.
Ch. 42. People ask advice, but do not follow it.
Ch. 43. Prophet's words rejected, because not pleasing.

Selections From the Minor Prophets

Hosea

In northern kingdom when it was exceedingly wicked.

Ch. 1. The names Lo-Ruhama and Lo-Ammi express a tragedy.
To lose man's compassion is bad; to lose God's worse.
To be rejected by human kindred is bad; to be rejected by God is worse.
Ch. 2. We fail to recognize our gifts as from God.

Ch. 2:14.	God's goodness surpasses his punishments.
Ch. 4:6.	Lack of knowledge wilful. Law deliberately rejected.
Ch. 5:6.	Rejected at the last, because they had rejected God.
Ch. 6:6.	Forms of religion not desired, but a right heart.
Ch. 7: 8.	Literally "poured over with heathenism," instead of holy oil, as cakes for sacrifice. Hence spoiled, and not fit for food for God, but devoured by the enemies.
Ch. 8:7.	What the sinner receives determined by what he does.
Ch. 9:10.	Israel at first a delight to Jehovah, but they turned away to abominations, and were rejected.
Ch. 10:10.	Goodness of God in all his punishments.
Ch. 12.	Punishments and mercies do not always lead to reforms.
Ch. 13:12.	God forgets sins that are repented of, but remembers others.
Ch. 14.	God's patience beyond expression. Nothing will end it but persistent sinning.

Joel

Probably first of writing prophets. He has two horizons: one near, one remote.

Ch. 1.	Calamities sent as judgments. Then, but not now.
Ch. 2:1—	Only hope of safety is to turn to God, not from him.
Ch. 2:13.	Genuine repentance demanded. The heart, not the cloak.
2:27.	God's presence shown by blessings as well as afflictions.
2:28.	Spirit "poured out," like the rain.
2:32.	Both deliverance and judgment from God.

Amos

Home in the south. Preached in the north. Time of excessive wealth and wickedness.

Ch. 1.	Nations condemned because of hostility to Israel.
	Opposition to the church is opposition to Christ.
Ch. 2:4, 6.	Judah and Israel punished like all other sinners.
2:9-11.	Privileges and blessings gauge the degree of offense.
	Blessings involve obligations. If not used for higher living, better be without them.
Ch. 3: 2.	God will punish according to deserts of each.
3:3-8.	Calamities known as judgments from prophet's interpretation only. No such interpretation now, hence cannot call a calamity a judgment.
	Sent then for teaching. That time passed. (1 Cor. 10:11.)
Ch. 3:9.	The world is viewing the Christian's conduct.
Ch. 5:11.	Oppression of the weak a sin against God.
	The welfare as well as the rights of others to be sought.
Ch. 5:18.	The "Day of Jehovah" would be dark to Israelite sinners as well as others. They would have no right to the promises of deliverance made.
Ch. 6:1—	The leaders the greatest sinners.
	The degree of sin measured by the sinner.
Ch. 7:1-9.	God's mercy immeasurable, not unlimited.
Ch. 8:2, 5.	God answers prayer and repents. But he may refuse to hear.
Ch. 9:7.	Israel's redemption from Egypt was no warrant of care, if sin persisted in.
	If like the heathen, then punished like them.

Obadiah

About the time of the fall of Jerusalem. All about Edom.

Ch. 1.	No credit to the nations that they did God's will.
Ver. 3-6.	Edom inaccessible to men, not to God.
	Man cannot rise higher than God's control.
Ver. 7.	All outside help fails.
Ver. 17-20.	Edom could not annul God's promise to Jacob.
Ver. 21.	God's kingship extends over all.

Jonah

The only foreign missionary sent from Israel. But his message meant for God's people, not for Nineveh.

Ch. 1.	That God did not let Jonah escape from his work does not prove that he will hold others to theirs.
Ver. 10, 11.	Even the heathen sailors recognize the God of Jonah because the storm agrees with the prophet's words.
Ver. 17.	To use what already exists may be miraculous.
Ch. 2:1.	Jonah's alternatives were to pray or perish.
Ch. 3:4.	Threat of destruction conditioned by repentance.
Ch. 4.	Jonah's hatred exceeded his sympathy.
	If he pitied a gourd, should not God pity children?

Micah

Micah prophesied about 725 B. C. He was a contemporary of Isaiah, and the political and social conditions determined largely his messages. It was during the Assyrian period after Tiglath-pileser had regained the power that this nation had lost for several generations. Judah had submitted to the suzereignty of Assyria by the faithlessness of Ahaz. The attempt of Hezekiah to throw off this rule came later.

Ch. 2:7-9.	The punishment to come in accord with the nation's sin.
Ch. 3.	Religious leaders specially condemned because they led into wickedness.
Ch. 4:1-5.	This is the same as Isaiah 2:16.
	That two used the same message does not show it to lack inspiration.
	God's people to be found also among the nations.

Ch. 5.	Remnant of Jacob like dew and the lion. Which it shall be determined by those among whom he would dwell: A blessing, or a destructive power.
Ch. 6:8.	Right living demanded, rather than right forms of service.
Ch. 7.	Mutual treachery the height of social evil.
Ver. 18.	The greatness of God shown in his mercy.

Nahum

A prophecy limited to a Gentile nation, Nineveh.

Ch. 1.	God's character of holiness the basis of both punishment and mercy.
Ch. 3.	Haughty Nineveh brought low for hostility to Israel.

Habakkuk

A short time before Jerusalem fell. A prophet's problem: Why allow wickedness to continue? Why allow the more wicked Babylon to triumph over God's people?

Ch.1:24.	The prophet's impatience due to his ignorance of God's purpose.
	Perplexities not always so soon removed, but that they will be should give hope.
Ver. 6.	The purpose of God included the purpose of Babylon, who yet did not intend to do God's purpose.
	We may not see where man's free agency and God's sovereignty unite, but the latter dominates all.
Ver. 12.	Babylon's triumph in spite of her wickedness, because God allowed it.
	God's use of men not determined by their goodness.

Ch. 2:3. Belief in God's promises not to be limited by the signs of fulfilment. Certain because given. Fulfilment may be delayed, not doubtful.

Ver. 4. Great Biblical truths occasioned by slight circumstances. The text of Paul's preaching; of Luther's reformation: the keyword of the Protestant movement given to Habakkuk when in doubting distress.

Ver. 18. The worshiper of idols may be sincere, but sincerity will not excuse his wickedness.

Ch. 3. "In wrath remember mercy."
That any escape wrath is due to God's mercy.

Ver. 17-19. Confidence in the midst of seeming destruction.

Zephaniah

Just before the death of Josiah, 608 B. C. Punishment imminent. Repentance urged.

Ch. 1:1. The prophet's royal descent did not determine his message. God will use any class of men.

Ver. 14. The "day of Jehovah" included the calamity upon Judah, but that did not exhaust its meaning.

Ver. 18. Sinners cannot buy their safety, nor bribe God.

Ch. 2. Punishment of the heathen retributive, not for correction. The lessons for God's people.

Ch. 3. God's love outmeasures his severity.
This truth emphasized in both Testaments.

Haggai

At the time of renewal of temple building.

Ch. 1:24. Discouraging conditions did not discourage from building their own houses.
God's interests often obscured by our own.

Ver. 13. The presence of Jehovah even before the work was begun. The spirit to work needed only.

Ch. 2:8. What men claim as theirs belongs to God.

Ver. 9. The glory of the temple not its size nor its gold, but the manifestation of God's presence.

Ch. 2:14.	A life of sin will contaminate all a man's deeds. May not be evident to men, but is to God.
Ver. 23.	Honor to Zerubbabel God's free gift.

Zechariah

Date same as of Haggai. Visions to meet difficulties of Jews in building.

Ch. 1:5, 6.	The death of the prophets did not prevent the fulfilment of their prophecies. The preacher may die, his words live on.
Ver. 12.	God's purposes seem delayed, but they will be carried out.
Ch. 2.	Though the workers were few, there would be enough, and more than expected.
Ch. 3.	God will forgive sin, that his work may be done.
Ch. 4.	Efficiency comes from God, not from material things. Power of God inexhaustible. Oil continuous.
Ch. 5.	Forgiveness of sin not to cause indifference to it. Sin will be punished if not repented of.
Ch. 6:3.	God appeased by punishing his enemies at times.
Ver. 10.	The real temple building the work of the Messiah. A people in whom he would dwell.
Ch. 7.	Fasting not a ground of credit, but the effect of sin.
Ch. 8:3.	The place where God dwells holy, in the heavens or in the heart.
Ver. 13-15.	The promise of good as sure as that of ill. As the one came, the other may be expected.
Ver. 23.	Joined to God's people in order to be joined to God. (Chapters 9 to 14 probably post-exilic.)
Ch. 9.	Neither power nor wealth can prevent punishment.
Ch. 10:6.	The mercy of Jehovah surpasses men's desire for it.
Ch. 11.	Foreshadowing the Good Shepherd.
Ch. 12:23.	Enemies of God harmed more than they harm.
Ch. 13:1.	God provides the means of cleansing from sin.
Ver. 7.	Shepherd smitten, sheep scattered, but a remnant left, God's true people.

Ch. 14:7. Darkness will be followed by light.
Ver. 18. Men will be at peace when they recognize one God.
Nations then will turn from warring to worshiping.
Ver. 20. The goal of God's dealings with men is holiness.

Malachi

Probably about 400 B. C. The close of Prophecy.

Ch. 1. Men may claim to be brothers, but God does not deal with all alike.
Ver. 6. The "fatherhood of God" means honor due him.
Ver. 11. The ideal is that God shall be honored among the Gentiles, even if his own people bring reproach upon him.
Ch. 2. A high office does not relieve from responsibility.
Ver. 14. An oath calls upon God to punish if the oath is violated. The solemnity of a wedding before God.
Ver. 16. The marital relation involves a divine relation.
Divorce is not a social matter only, but religious
Ver. 17. Delayed judgment leads to increased wickedness.
Speedy punishment a deterrent of crime.
Ch. 3:6. God keeps his covenant, hence man not destroyed.
Ver. 9. To hold back the pastor's salary is to rob God.
Ver. 10. These were tithes of material things, but the principle may be applied to spiritual things.
Ver. 16. When men talk together about God, he listens.
The most important record of man's doings is the one God writes.
Ver. 17. No word here means "jewels." But God's people will be his "special possession" in the day of judgment, and will be spared.
Ch. 4:2. The "sun of righteousness" does not refer to Christ.
God's brightness may either bless or burn.

Suggestions From the Psalms

A Psalm to a Sermon

Sometimes a whole chapter or psalm may well be taken for the theme of a sermon, presenting the dominant thought in the selection. This general thought of a psalm may differ from any one that may be found in a single verse, and often may be obscured by what is emphasized from the single verse. The sermon need not be long, because the text is. The topics suggested here are not the only ones that might be selected.

Psalm 1. Contrasts in God's sight.
2. Inviolability of the Sovereignty of Christ.
3. God watches while man sleeps.
4. Men doubt, God remains faithful.
7. Confidence maintained though wickedness rampant.
8. Man's supreme authority over all creation.
10. False security of the sinner.
11. God on his throne observes men.
12. Grounds for rebuking the pessimist.
15. Conditions for right worship.
16. The supreme possession.
17. Earthly and heavenly possessions contrasted.
18. Victor by God's help.
19. God's word supplies what nature lacks.
20. Only those who trust in God secure.
21. A song of triumph.
22. World-wide effect of Christ's suffering.
23. God's care as Shepherd and Host.
24. Arch of God's triumph.
32. Gratitude for forgiveness.
39. Uncomplaining submission in affliction.
40. Help to obey expected and received.
42. Unreasonable despondency.

Psalm 47. God King of all the earth.
50. Our gifts to God already his.
57. The fixed heart of one who trusts.
62. Sure help in God only.
63. Help expected because help has been given.
65. A Thanksgiving psalm.
67. Missionary's work to make God known to the nations.
71. Confidence of the aged.
73. Hope of heaven.
76. God's praise from man's wrath.
78. Résumé of God's mercy.
80. Prayer for restored favor. Triple refrain.
81. God's bounty may be limited by the recipient.
82. Rulers judged as well as the ruled.
84. Seeing God the ideal goal.
85. Heaven's righteousness and earth's peace joined.
86. Confident because of God's character.
87. The natives of Zion favored.
88. Sad lament of the afflicted.
89. Splendid promises of God delayed.
90. Israel dying in the desert because of unbelief.
91. Perfect safety in God's care.
92. Good to praise God all day.
93. God rules over all nature.
94. Boasting of the wicked will not last.
95. A call to worship and a warning.
96. Each new day demands a new song.
98. All the earth an orchestra for praising God.
99. God, though awful, listens to man's supplications.
100. We belong to God as Creator.
101. A good platform for a ruler's inauguration.
102. Universal change, but God abides.
103. God compassionate upon those made of dust.
104. A hymn of creation; God's beneficence.
108. Gentile and Jew belong to God.
110. Christ the Priest-King.
112. A scattering not wasteful.
115. Men are like what they worship.

Psalm 116. Gratitude for help publicly expressed.
117. The shortest psalm full of meaning.
118. The hymn that Jesus and the disciples sang.
119. High estimate of God's law.
120. Danger in deceitful words.
121. God's unceasing watch-care.
122. Delight in the place of worship.
125. Those who trust in the Lord unmovable.
125. The greatest cause for laughter.
129. Afflicted but not overcome.
130. No depths too deep for God's help to reach.
132. Zeal in God's cause.
133. The beauty of Christian unity.
136. Praise for God's enduring mercy.
137. God's house remembered by the absent ones.
139. Cannot go where God will not be, to keep and care.
144. Almightiness of God ground of confidence.
148. Everything should praise God.
150. All things in all ways to praise God always.

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